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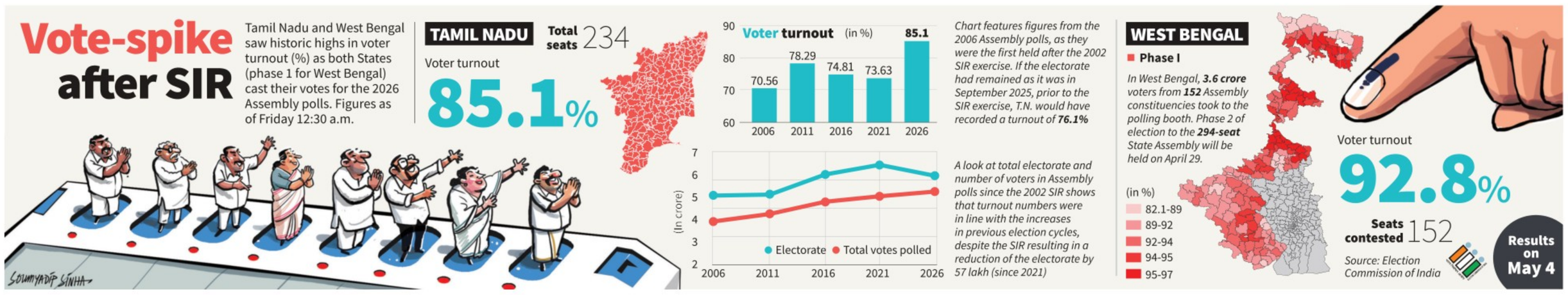
Vote-spike after SIR
Tamil Nadu and West Bengal saw historic highs in voter turnout (%) as both States (phase 1 for West Bengal) cast their votes for the 2026 Assembly polls. Figures as of Friday 12:30 a.m.
TAMIL NADU
Total seats 234
Voter turnout
85.1%
Voter turnout (in %)
70.56
78.29
74.81
73.63
85.1
2006 2011 2016 2021 2026
(In crore)
Electorate
Total votes polled
Chart features figures from the 2006 Assembly polls, as they were the first held after the 2002 SIR exercise. If the electorate had remained as it was in September 2025, prior to the SIR exercise, T.N. would have recorded a turnout of 76.1%
A look at total electorate and number of voters in Assembly polls since the 2002 SIR shows that turnout numbers were in line with the increases in previous election cycles, despite the SIR resulting in a reduction of the electorate by 57 lakh (since 2021)
WEST BENGAL
Phase I
In West Bengal, 3.6 crore voters from 152 Assembly constituencies took to the polling booth. Phase 2 of election to the 294-seat State Assembly will be held on April 29.
(in %)
82.1-89
89-92
92-94
94-95
95-97
Voter turnout
92.8%
Seats contested 152
Source: Election Commission of India
Results on May 4
SOUMYADIP SINHA

T.N., Bengal see massive turnout

Over 85% polling in Tamil Nadu, highest in its electoral history

Dennis S. Jesudasan
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu made electoral history on Thursday as it recorded its highest polling percentage in an Assembly election – 85.15%. According to provisional figures, over 4.85 crore people voted from 7 a.m. in all the 234 Assembly constituencies to elect the 17th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar said that it was the highest percentage of polling in the State. "[The] ECI salutes each voter," he said.

The data released were "provisional and did not include services voters and postal ballots", a senior official said, meaning that polling figures could still go up.

Tamil Nadu is facing a four-cornered electoral fight involving the ruling DMK-led alliance, the Opposition AIADMK-led alliance, new entrant, actor C. Joseph Vijay-led TVK and the Naam Tamilar Katchi founded by Seeman.

The special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in the State was strongly cited by SIR critics as the primary reason for the high polling percentage.

The turnout could have been higher if not for the massive traffic snarls of south-bound public and private vehicles from Chennai along the Grand Southern Trunk Road for several hours on Wednesday night.

Digital drive: A robot welcomes voters at a polling booth at Nellikuppam in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu on Thursday. S.S. KUMAR

Poll reflections

Throughout the day, the mood of the electorate was reflected in the shades of the voters' attire, social media posts, and the unsuspecting *kolams*. The choice of the political party and candidate at the ballot was the dominant topic of discussion in almost all public places.

Within two hours of polling since 7 a.m., about 17.69% of the electorate had voted and the percentage touched 37.56% by 11 a.m. Even in the scorching heat, the pace of polling seemed to have continued between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and the percentage was 56.81% by 1 p.m. After lunch time, the pace dipped and by 3 p.m., the polling percentage was 70%. The turnout crossed 80% by 5 p.m. and stood at 82.24% with about an hour of polling left.

Polling was largely peaceful but for incidents, including in Vengaivayal where people boycotted the polls with black flags over caste-based atrocities committed against the Scheduled Castes in 2022.

Polling peaceful in State barring stray instances of boycott with black flags and scuffles

In Chennai, there were scuffles in Harbour, and Thousand Lights constituencies between supporters of the AIADMK and the DMK.

DMK president and incumbent Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, along with his family members, voted in the Mylapore constituency and AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami voted in the Edappadi constituency. Mr. Vijay and Mr. Seeman voted in Neelankarai.

Record 93% polling as 152 Bengal constituencies vote in first phase

Shiv Sahay Singh
Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

West Bengal registered a record voter turnout of 92.88% in the first phase of Assembly election on Thursday, amidst isolated incidents of violence. The election, which saw the highest-ever polling in the State, is being held amid a four-month-long special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls that saw a drop in the electorate by about 12%.

Among the districts, Cooch Behar led the State with 96.04% polling, followed by Dakshin Dinajpur at 95.44% and Jalpaiguri at 94.65%. Murshidabad, which recorded the highest number of deletion of electors during the adjudication phase, recorded a voter turnout of 93.61%. According to Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Agarwal, the polling percentage is expected to rise further when final figures arrive. Before the 2026 election, the highest turnout was recorded in 2011 when 84.33% voters exercised their franchise. The election in 2011 saw the Trinamool Congress defeating the 34-year Left Front government.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

The first phase of voting for the 2026 Assembly election was held across 152 Assembly seats and with the polling concluding by 6 p.m., the fate of 1,478 candidates has been sealed in the electronic voting machines (EVMs).

Mandate on hand: People stand in a queue to cast their vote at Nandigram in West Bengal during the first phase of polls on Thursday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that the people came out in large numbers because this was an election to save their right to vote.

"The people know that if they do not vote for the Trinamool Congress, their right to vote will be taken away. The next step is NRC (National Register of Citizens) and they (the Union government) had already brought the delimitation Bill," Ms. Banerjee said while addressing a gathering in Bowbazar area of Kolkata.

People came out in large numbers to save their right to vote, says Chief Minister Mamata

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who addressed public meetings at three different venues and held a roadshow in the State, congratulated the Election Commission (EC) for holding the polls without much violence. "I congratulate all the voters. Everyone should celebrate the festival of democracy. There has been less violence this time so far. I congratulate the Election Commission," the Prime Minister said, expressing hope that all records will be broken this time with the enthusiasm shown by the people.

Congress leader and Berhampur candidate Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury also expressed satisfaction over the role of the EC.

The EC has deployed over 2,400 companies of Central forces to ensure free and fair elections. Despite the deployment, stray incidents of unrest and violence were reported across different districts.

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MORE REPORTS ON » PAGE 17

NEARBY

Migrant workers face travel chaos amid polls

BENGALURU
With Assembly elections in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, several parts of Bengaluru witnessed severe congestion at railway stations and bus terminals over the past few days as many migrant workers made plans to return home to vote. » PAGE 3

HC stays order to file FIR against Home Minister

BENGALURU
The High Court stayed a special court order, which directed the Tumakuru police to register an FIR against Home Minister G. Parameshwara and Tumakuru Deputy Commissioner Subha Kalyan over 'betting' during a kabbadi tournament. » PAGE 12

METROLPLUS » PAGE 11

Troubled waters: A still from a video released by Iran shows the seizure of a container ship in the Strait of Hormuz. REUTERS

Trump orders strike against Iran vessels

Agence France-Presse
Associated Press
TEHRAN/DUBAI

Putting more pressure on a fraying ceasefire in West Asia, U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday ordered the Navy to destroy any Iranian boat caught laying mines in the Strait of Hormuz, while Tehran said it has banked the first proceeds from the tolls it is exacting on shipping through the strait.

"I have ordered the United States Navy to shoot and kill any boat, small boats though they may be... that is putting mines in the waters of the Strait of Hormuz," Mr. Trump posted on social media.

The U.S. is under no pressure to end the war with Iran, but "the clock is ticking" for Tehran, the U.S. President said in another post.

Meanwhile, two container ships seized by Iran near the Strait of Hormuz with about 40 crew aboard have been taken toward the port of Bandar Abbas, sources said on Thursday, with Tehran having vowed to retaliate after U.S. forces seized an Iranian vessel three days earlier.

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LEBANON-ISRAEL TALKS » PAGE 20

SC questions ED's claim of rule of law breach in Bengal

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked whether the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) was making a case of "breakdown of constitutional machinery" in West Bengal, momentarily pausing the Central agency's rejoinder against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, senior State police officers, and bureaucrats for allegedly violating the rule of law to "barge" into the I-PAC premises in Kolkata during a raid and leaving with material said to be incriminating in a coal smuggling case.

"We hope you are not arguing 'breakdown of constitutional machinery' in the context of the controversy you are raising," Justice N.V. Anjaria, a member of the Division Bench headed by Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, asked Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the ED.

The failure of constitutional machinery is a ground to impose President's Rule in a State under Article 356 of the Constitution. The query from the Bench followed submissions from the ED about a "well-established pattern" of violations by the Chief Minister, the State police, and the ruling Trinamool Congress, and a "non-existent" rule of law over the years in West Bengal.

> This is a law and order issue... State governments, including the States of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, have repeatedly approached the Supreme Court under Article 32, and been entertained by this court
> **TUSHAR MEHTA**
> Solicitor-General

Incidents recalled

Mr. Mehta referred to the police "siege" of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Joint Director's residence in Kolkata and the arrest of CBI officials in 2019, a "mob" of lawyers and party workers crowding into a Calcutta High Court courtroom on January 9, 2026, and the Director-General of Police "acting as the PSO (personal security officer) of the Chief Minister".

Mr. Mehta responded that there was "nothing up the sleeve" of the ED in the case. He said the "rule of law" was a "part and parcel", an essential part of Article 14, of the Constitution. The ED officials, against whom the State police registered criminal cases for conducting what was described as a lawful investigation, have a fundamental right to equality before the law or equal protection of the laws. "The ED cannot argue 'breakdown of constitutional machinery' [Article 356]," Mr. Mehta said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 16

SSLC exam-1: State records 'historic' 94.1 pass percentage

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka recorded a "historic" 94.1% pass percentage among regular fresh students in this year's Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) Annual Exam-1, against the 80.04% (all three exams) achieved last year.

The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) released the results on Thursday. As per the data of KSEAB this year a total of 7,70,209 regular students appeared for the exams of which 7,24,794 have managed to pass.

Including repeaters and private candidates, the number of students who appeared was 8,56,516; out of which 7,60,002 cleared the exams – resulting in a pass rate of 88.73%, an increase from the 74.74% reported the previous year.

Attributing the increase in results to the various measures taken by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa thanked the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who insisted the department focus more on classroom teaching and learning, as well as parents, teachers, officials and legislators who have supported the department's efforts in bringing out these results.

"This time, the syllabus was completed in all schools by the end of December, and an enormous revision was done from January. We have conducted special classes and provided free electricity, which helped schools to conduct special classes even late in the evening. The efforts of all zilla panchayat CEOs in this regard are commendable, and they personally monitored the SSLC classes and several such measures have helped us to reach these results," said Mr. Bangarappa.

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RELATED REPORTS ON » PAGE 2

VIJAY SONEJI & NAGARA GOPAL

Tryst with success – the Tilak-Abhishek redemption

Though Suryavanshi has been attracting eyeballs with his swashbuckling starts, the left-handers from Mumbai Indians and Sunrisers have found form with different methods that could be pivotal to their teams' fortunes

R. Kaushik

This is an IPL dominated by left-handed batters. The cynosure is a teenaged wunderkind who is gradually waking up to the reality that franchise cricket isn't just a bed of roses, but there have been others who have held sway too, established internationals who have done their country proud but are also proving their worth to their respective sides emphatically.

Sanju Samson enjoyed the privilege of becoming the first centurion of IPL 2026 in his first season with Chennai Super Kings, but since then, a trio of left-handers has joined him in the three-figure stakes. Mumbai Indians' Quinton de Kock became the first overseas performer to score hundreds for three different franchises, while in consecutive days, Tilak Varma for Mumbai Indians and Abhishek Sharma for Sunrisers Hyderabad delighted their vast legion of fans with typically attractive hundreds to somewhat deflect the attention from Vaibhav Suryavanshi.

At 15, the Bihar left-hander is doing things that people twice his age would give an arm and a leg to achieve. Twice this season, he has brought up 15-ball half-centuries, the joint third-fastest in the tournament's history dating back to 2008. On Wednesday, he became the fastest to reach 500 IPL runs, a comfortable five-and-a-half overs quicker than Australian Glenn Maxwell, and by a distance the youngest (by more than four years) to reach that milestone. Suryavanshi has courted the odd failure, which is just as well because it is better to taste success and embrace the lack of it very early in one's career, but he continues to remain in the top five run-makers of the season, his 254 runs coming at a spectacular strike-rate of 220.86.

Suryavanshi came into the IPL on an absolute high, unleashing a monstrous 175 in the final of the 50-over Under-19 World Cup against England on February 6, a little over a month and a half before the start of the 20-over feast. Not to be left behind, Abhishek and Tilak also approached the tournament as World Cup winners at the first time of asking, in their very first T20 World Cup. Abhishek salvaged a terribly poor tournament - his first three outings didn't produce a single run, and he had only 89 runs in seven innings heading into the title clash - with an outrageous 18-ball half-century in the final against New Zealand, justifying the repeated and public show of faith in him from the leadership group. At no stage when he was stumbling from one low score to another was any thought given to benching him. Thriving on the positive vibes and digging deep into his inner reserves of resilience and exceptional skill, he came good when it mattered the most, burying the Kiwis under an avalanche of boundaries from which Mitchell Santner's men never recovered.

Tilak, on the other hand, had a curious tournament. For the first five games, he batted at his customary No. 3 position that he had acquired from his national skipper Suryakumar Yadav. The runs weren't humongous - three consecutive scores of 25, followed by 31 and 1 - but his strike-rate became a point of needless, ill-advised debate. On challenging surfaces that confronted his team in the group phase, where he invariably came out to bat in the first over of the innings, Tilak scored at 118.88 runs per 100 balls faced. For someone whose career strike-rate is in excess of 145, it was a definitive comedown, but it was what was the need of the hour because India repeatedly found themselves in early trouble.

Tilak's intelligence and commonsense batting was held against him by the 'experts' even though India eked out victories in the first four matches; in the fifth, when he was dismissed in the second over essaying a wild thrash at Marco Jansen that landed in de Kock's gloves, India were shot out for 111 to suffer a 76-run drubbing.

It was this loss to South Africa in their opening Super Eight fixture which compelled India to make a structural change in the batting order. That meant splitting the left-handed opening combine of Abhishek and Ishan Kishan, who dropped to No. 3 to make way for Samson. Tilak was pushed further down the order, twice batting at No. 6, once at No. 5 and the other time at No. 7 in the last four outings. His returns were sensational in impact, if not numerically; 44 deliveries as the tournament headed to a climax netted 100 runs (SR 227.27), marked by seven fours and eight sixes. He was a revelation down the order, often providing the final kick including in the semifinal against England when his 7-ball 21 (including three sixes in the penultimate over from Jofra Archer) proved decisive, given that the difference between the sides was only seven runs.

Peaks and valleys

Abhishek has had a strange 2026 in T20 Internationals. He got his year off to a cracking start with 84 off a mere 35 deliveries against New Zealand in Nagpur, but 13 innings in all have brought four half-centuries and a stunning five ducks. That can happen with someone who plays in the manner in which the 25-year-old does, but he had feelgood and the high of a World Cup winner's medal around his neck when he linked up with his SRH colleagues, who love him to the exception of everyone else.

In Hyderabad, Abhishek is the golden child that can do no wrong. The city of Nawabs, Irani *chai* and tie biscuit has taken him to heart from the time he donned the orange of the SRH and he reciprocates the love, evidenced by the pre-written note he flashed while dedicating his first hundred for the franchise last year to the Orange Army, SRH's unofficial 12th man. TraviShek was a thing once, when Abhishek and Australian opener Travis Head matched each other stroke for scything stroke and for their destruction quotient. It's fair to say that Abhishek has left his more experienced teammate way behind now. At the time of writing, he leads the run-making charts with 323 from 150 deliveries at a strike-rate of 215.33, while Head is way down the list with only 180 runs at a relatively pedestrian 144 runs per 100 balls.

Orthodox and conventional

On Tuesday night at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Uppal, Abhishek had an already pliant crowd eating out of his hands with a memorable unbeaten 135 to follow up on an equally bruising 59 just a couple of nights previously against Chennai Super Kings. The recipients of his Tuesday fury were Axar Patel and his Delhi Capitals, flying high after conquering Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the Chinnaswamy but quickly brought crashing down to earth by the pyrotechnics of Abhishek. What makes the Punjab lad particularly dangerous is that he is an orthodox, conventional stroke-maker who hardly seeks recourse to the reverse and the switch-hit.

Abhishek put on a masterclass in hitting down the ground. A wagon wheel of his 68-ball compilation will be replete with boundaries - along the ground and deep into the stands - to the straight field. Light on his feet and unafraid to don his dancing shoes, Abhishek can clear the longest of boundaries with effortless ease. For a lithe individual, he packs quite a punch and clearly, he is relishing being both the front man and the man with the license to slay the bowling which has been bestowed on him by Daniel Vettori, his head coach, and Kishan, who has stood in for Pat Cummins as captain since the start of the competition.

Where Abhishek's century was the culmination of a largely consistent run, Tilak didn't have the greatest start to the tournament. Batting at No. 3 and 4 at the beginning, he scored 35 in his first four innings when he was pushed down to No. 7 against Punjab Kings, where he managed 8. With 43 runs from five innings, the 23-year-old from Hyderabad was beginning to feel internal heat. Mumbai Indians, the five-time former champions, lost four in a trot after winning their first game of the season for the first time since 2012, their cause further hampered by meagre returns for Suryakumar as well as skipper Hardik Pandya.

The ploy pays off

Tilak wasn't under extraneous pressure when he lined up against Gujarat Titans on Sunday because his volume of work gave him the cushion of a few low scores, but situational pressure was tangible when he walked out to take guard at the Narendra Modi Stadium at No. 5. Mumbai had lost de Kock, debutant Danish Malewar and Suryakumar with only 44 on the board in the sixth over when Tilak joined forces with Naman Dhir. Ahead of the match, Tilak felt he was selling himself and his team short by not spending enough time at the crease; he therefore chose to work his way into an innings instead of unloading in a frenzy, and the ploy paid off perfectly.

At various stages during the first half of his essay, it might have seemed as if Tilak was being too conservative and diffident, which he perhaps was, given that his first 22 deliveries produced only 19 runs. From there, there was only one thing he could do to justify that start - go big, go deep, because otherwise, he would be leaving the incoming batter with too much to do. And that's precisely what he embarked on as 82 came off the next 23 deliveries in a ferocious exhibition of ball-bashing even though he hardly tried to hit the cover off the ball.

By the time he left the park, timing his knock so superbly that he brought up his maiden IPL century off the final ball of the innings, he destroyed Prasidh Krishna's figures. The strapping Bengalurean has been one of the success stories for Gujarat this season, like he was last year too when he won the Purple Cap, but Tilak treated him scarcely concealed disdain, though it must be pointed out that Prasidh wasn't alone in copping punishment. There was a surety of touch and a single-mindedness of purpose to Tilak that was obvious even on the television screen and when he reached three-figures off his 45th ball, he joined Sanath Jayasuriya as the fastest to a century for Mumbai Indians. Abhishek is aware of the massive scramble for opening slots in the Indian team, while Tilak will have taken note of the special seasons Shreyas Iyer and Rajat Patidar, among others, are having in the middle-order. Both left-handers are aware they have the backing of the management team led by Gautam Gambhir, but neither believes in resting on past laurels. More power to them.

** All stats updated before Thursday's match between MI and CSK.*

THE GIST

- Abhishek is relishing being both the front man and the man with the license to slay the bowling which has been bestowed on him
- Where Abhishek's century was the culmination of a largely consistent run, Tilak didn't have the greatest start to the tournament
- Tilak's first 22 deliveries against Gujarat produced only 19 runs. From there, there was only one thing he could do to justify that start – go big, go deep

Govt. school students see results improve by 16%

3,06,341 students appeared for the exam from government schools, of which 2,87,878 have passed, recording an overall pass percentage of 93.97 as against the 77.15 last year from all three exams

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Students of government schools have performed well in the SSLC examination-1 this year by improving the results by nearly 16% as against the pass percentage recorded last year.

This year, a total of 3,06,341 students appeared for the exams from government schools, of which 2,87,878 have managed to pass, recording an overall pass percentage of 93.97 as against the 77.15 recorded last year from all the three exams.

The number of government schools securing 100% results has also increased this year. In 2024-25 the number of government schools with 100% results was 766, which increased to 2393 this year.

The number of government schools securing 100% results has also increased this year. PTI

There were no government schools with 0% results.

Meanwhile, aided schools also showed improvement. Last year, the pass percentage of aided schools was 75.04, which increased to 92.44% this year. When it comes to schools with 100% results, 824 aided schools have managed to achieve this against the 145 schools last year. Even the schools with zero performance have come down from eight last year to five this time.

The performance of unaided schools has also improved with students achieving 95.4% pass as against the 87.31% last year. A total of 2959 private unaided schools have secured 100% results and 22 schools have failed to perform.

SSLC EXAM

Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa stated that all government schools which have achieved 100% results will be advertised to let the public know that even government schools provide quality education. "I request parents to admit their children to government schools," he added.

There is substantial increase in the pass percentage of rural students over urban students.

Rural students have outperformed their urban counterparts with 94.80% results. Urban students managed to secure 93.67%. Previous year, urban students had outperformed their rural counterparts.

Medium-wise results
Telugu medium students have secured the highest percentage compared to six other mediums, including Kannada, English, Urdu and Hindi. The pass percentages stood at: Telugu - 96.77, English - 96.16, Marathi - 92.93, Kannada - 92.6, Urdu - 90.34, Tamil - 88.89, Hindi - 53.72.

Grade-wise results
This year, a total of 68,207 (9.41%) students have secured 'A+' grade by securing between 90 to 100%. Under 'A' grade (80 to 89%) there are over 1,30,403 (17.99%) students and 'B+' (70 to 79%) has been secured by 1,40,963 (19.45%), 'B' grade (60 to 69%) by 1,42,645 (19.68%), 'C+' (50 to 59%) scored by 1,28,722 (17.76%) and 1,13,854 (15.71%) students secured 'C' grade (35 to 49%).

Subject-wise scores
As many as 31,255 students secured out of out marks (100/100) in third language Hindi, which is highest among all the subjects. This is followed by 10,686 in Social Science, First language Kannada 10,341, in second language Kannada 7,140 and 2,678 in second language English.

Zero and 100% results
As many as 27 schools failed to yield any results and of that 5 aided and 22 private unaided schools. But, this year there is no zero results in any government schools.

A total of 6,176 schools recorded 100% results of which 2,393 were government, 2,959 private unaided and 824 aided.

Dakshina Kannada tops
In district wise performance, Dakshina Kannada retained the first position with 98.40% and Udupi the second with 98.18%. Uttara Kannada, which was in fourth place, jumped to third, with Hassan shifting from third to fourth position.

Boys vs girls
Continuing the trend, girls out-shined boys this year too with an overall pass percentage of 96.18 against the 91.94% secured by boys.

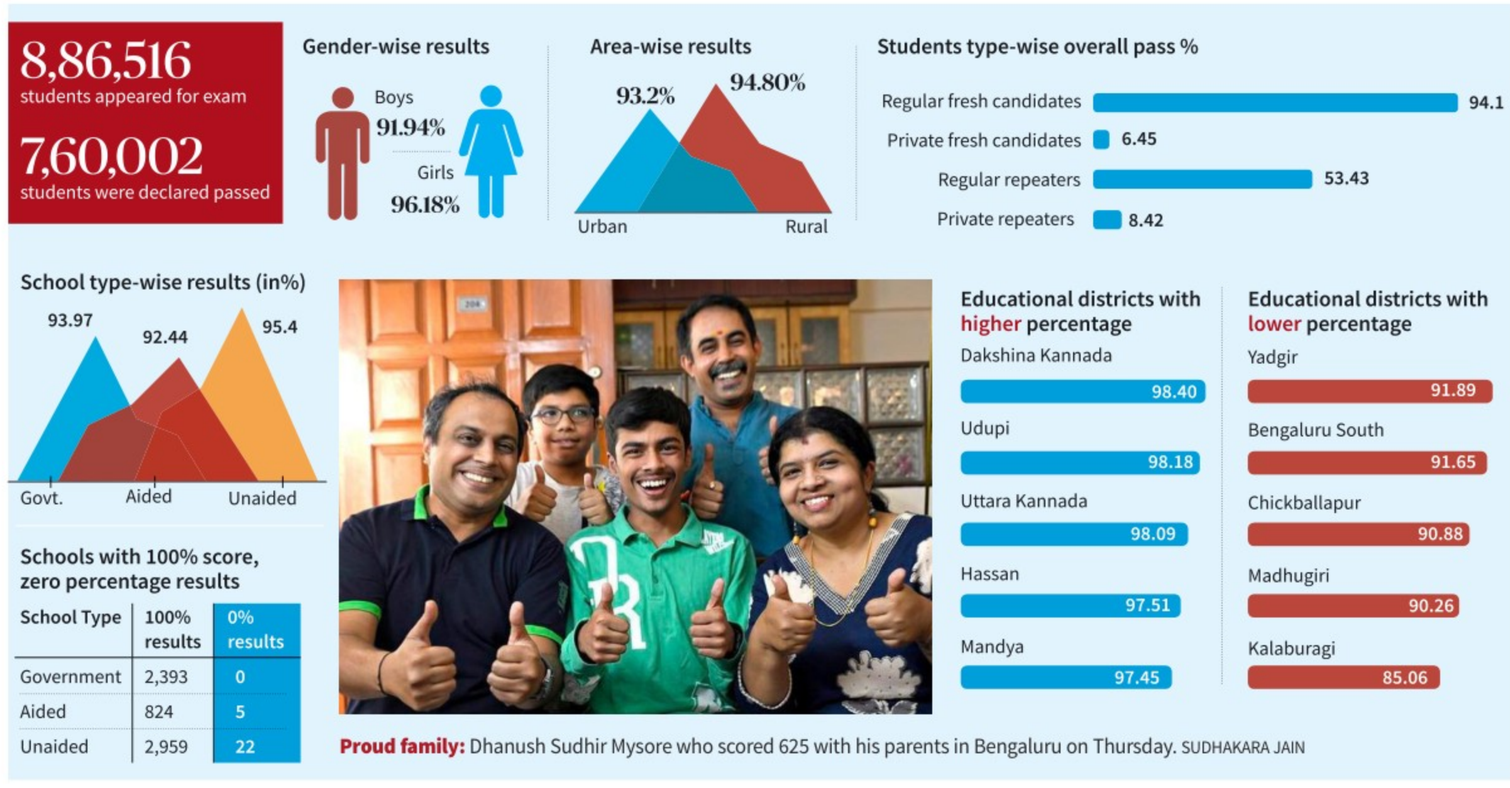
However, compared to last year, this year boys' pass percentage is increased by 17.69%, while girls pass percentage increased by 10.48%.

From Page One

SSLC exam-1: State records 'historic' 94.1 pass percentage

The decision to reduce the pass percentage from 35 to 33 has contributed to an increase in results for the department, with the Minister noting that this change has benefited 1,532 students.

This year, as many as seven students have secured 625 out of 625: Prarthana Nagappa Biradar Patil from Government High School, Katageri, Athani taluk, Chikkodi; Bharath. G from Sri Vidyalakshmi English Medium High School, Kabbala, Davangere; Brunda M. Tapse from St. Mary's High School, Chikkamagaluru; Dhanush Sudhir Mysore from Poorna Prajna Education Centre, Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru; Preetham G. Poojary of Mother Theresa Memorial School, Udupi; Saujanya Basavraj Kandakur from Oxford English Medium High School Muddebihala, Vijayapura and Sukhadeva from BVR English Medium High School Manvi, Raichur.



Proud family: Dhanush Sudhir Mysore who scored 625 with his parents in Bengaluru on Thursday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Third language results improve

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Despite the controversy over awarding grades instead of marks for third languages, students performed well in third language subjects in this year's SSLC exams. The pass percentage in the third 3rd language saw a drastic increase this year.

Compared to last time, the number of students failing in the third language also decreased significantly this year.

As per the data shared by the KSEAB, last year, a total of 83,088 students failed in the third language, the highest in Hindi with 75,792.

However, this year, the number of students who failed in Hindi was 9,481 and the total number of students who failed in third languages 10,963.

The State government's decision earlier to award grades instead of marks for third language had created controversy with the stakeholders, including schools, teachers and students, opposing it, which forced the government to retain the existing marks system following the court order.

While announcing the shift from marks to grades for third language subjects, Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa had said that it was to reduce pressure on children.

Even on Thursday, the Minister reiterated this. "I will share more details on this in a couple of days with a scientific study report," he added.

ON TOP OF THE WORLD Seven students from different regions of Karnataka and different socio-economic backgrounds made it to the top in the SSLC results announced on Thursday, scoring 625/625

Prarthana Nagappa Biradar Patil

Prathana studied in the government school where her father Nagappa teaches Kannada, and says she is happy to have done him and her school proud. She said her study strategy was simple with a focus on being attentive in the classroom. Prarthana hopes to be a doctor.

Bharath G.

Son of a farmer and farm labour with a small land holding from Kanivebilachi village, Bharath used to travel to school everyday from his village. His father Girish has a small landholding and works as a farm labour to supplement income, while mother Shilpa is a home maker.

Brunda M. Tapse

Brunda says results were no surprise to her as she had prepared well. The daughter of Manju, a tailor by profession, she studied for about six to seven hours a day, besides the school hours. "Every day I had a goal and I met it," said Brunda, who wants to be an engineer.

Saujanya Kandakur

Saujanya says the secret to her success was her smart studying techniques, that focussed on understanding and not rote learning. Both her parents are teachers in government school in Hungund town, in the neighboring Bagalkot district. Saujanya aspires to be a scientist.

Sukhadeva

Sukhadeva said he only studied four to five hours a day, and though initially took tuitions for a month, he later began studying by himself. His father Parashuram is a lecturer in Manvi, and his mother Chandrakala is a government school teacher in Potanal village.

Dhanush Sudhir Mysore

Dhanush is a great lover of sports and studied even as he continued playing chess, cricket, and tennis. "But, as the exams approached, I began studying seriously," he said. Dhanush wants to complete engineering, followed by an MBA degree, and secure a job in a big firm.

Preetham G. Poojary

Preetham said it was his school founder, B. Shamitha Rao, who egged him on to score centum. Son of Ganapathy Poojary, a private bus conductor, and Nagaratna, a home maker, he said a series of preparatory tests helped him take the exam without any stress.

No third examination

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Considering the highest number of passes this year, the Department of School Education and Literacy has decided not to conduct a third examination. The second examination will be held between May 18 and May 25, and those who wish to improve their marks and those who have failed in the exams can take the second exam.

No fee for exam-2
The KSEAB has announced a complete fee waiver for SSLC annual exam-2 for those who failed in the exam-1. However, students who want to improve their scores and appear for the exam will have to pay the fee. In addition, this time, in the wake of the third language grading controversy, students who failed in the third language and want to improve their scores have also been given a fee waiver.

SNIPPETS

Special students
During 2026 exams 4,099 children with special needs appeared for the SSLC exams of which 3,621 (88%) managed to pass. This includes 769 intellectual disability, 549 visually impaired, 823 hearing impaired, 795 locomotor disability, 71 cerebral palsy, 132 multiple disabilities.

Important dates
Students can apply for a scanned copy, revaluation and re-totalling of the answer scripts through a mobile app designed by the KSEAB.

April 23 to 26: Apply for scanned copy; April 27 to 28: To make payment for the scanned copies applied; April 28 to May 4: Apply for revaluation and retotalling; SSLC exam-2: May 18 to 25.

Kalyana Karnataka makes significant strides

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

In a striking turnaround, the long-underperforming Kalyana Karnataka region has registered a sharp improvement in SSLC (Class 10) results this year, breaking its pattern of occupying the bottom rungs in State rankings and signalling a broader shift in learning outcomes.

The region recorded an overall pass percentage of 91.6% in 2026, a massive jump of nearly 20 percentage points from last year's 71.7% across all three exams.

The scale of improvement is particularly significant given that several districts in the region consistently figured among the lowest performers in the State.

Improvement
All seven districts of Kalyana Karnataka have registered double-digit gains underlining a uniform rise rather than isolated improvement.

Yadgir (91.9%) and Kalaburagi (85.1%) recorded the steepest increases with 29.8 and 28.2 percentage points, respectively, marking a dramatic recovery from last year's low base.

Raichur improved to 94.4% (up 19.4 points), Bidar to 92.2% (up 18.8 points) and Koppal to 93.1% (up 14.2 points).

Ballari too climbed to 93.4%, while Vijayanagara has emerged as the best-performing district in the region with 96.4%, though its incremental gain (9.6 points) is relatively moderate as it already has a higher base.

A year ago, most Kalyana Karnataka districts were clustered at the bottom of the State ranking table with Kalaburagi placed last and Yadgir and Raichur among the lowest ranks (as seen in 2024-25 data).

The latest results show a clear shift, with Raichur, Koppal and Bidar moving into the middle band and Vijayanagara entering the upper tier.

Even though Kalaburagi remains in the lower segment, its sharp improvement indicates that the gap with the rest of the State is narrowing.

Govt. schools
The turnaround appears to be driven significantly by improvements in government schools. The pass percentage in government institutions in the region rose to 92% from 69.46% last year, an increase of over 22 percentage points, higher than the gains seen in aided and unaided schools.

This suggests that systemic interventions at the public school-level may have played a crucial role in lifting the overall performance of the region.

Interestingly, rural students have outperformed their urban peers, registering a pass percentage of 92.7 against 89.9 in urban areas. This marks a notable shift, as rural areas, traditionally seen as disadvantaged, have demonstrated stronger academic outcomes this year.

Given the socio-economic profile of the region, with students from economically weaker backgrounds, this improvement is noteworthy.

Pathogens without payback: when sharing isn't caring

Poorer nations that share critical pathogen data often benefit little from the health outcomes developed using that data; the long overdue PABS framework is critical to fixing this system; with another round of negotiations beginning on April 27, a lot is riding on how quickly and effectively both parties find common ground

Harsh Kabra

When contagions don't discriminate, why should cures? That question encapsulates a bitter irony of global public health. Countries that contribute the most pathogens to medical research are often the last to benefit from the outcomes.

Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America, where new pathogens often emerge, are expected to proactively share biological materials and genomic data with the world through the World Health Organization (WHO). However, countries that develop life-critical vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics (VTDs) using that material are under no obligation to reciprocate with fair and timely access to these clinical products. Risks are shared; rewards are not.

Despite the proven human cost of this inequity, the historic WHO Pandemic Agreement (WPA), adopted in May 2025, still lacks the much-needed Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) Annex. Without a binding legal framework to enforce fair sharing from samples to solutions, a coordinated global response to cross-border health crises will remain fraught with challenges.

Call for change: Low- and middle-income countries where new pathogens often emerge, are expected to proactively share biological materials and genomic data with the world. However, countries that develop life-critical vaccines using that material are under no obligation to reciprocate. GETTY IMAGES

THE GIST

Countries that contribute the most pathogens to medical research are often the last to benefit from the outcomes. Despite the proven human cost of this inequity, the historic WHO Pandemic Agreement (WPA), adopted in May 2025, still lacks the much-needed Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) Annex

PABS seeks to legally link sample-sharing to guaranteed benefits, making it mandatory for pharmaceutical manufacturers to provide 20% of real-time VTD production to the WHO during declared pandemics, at least half of it for free and the remaining at reasonable prices

While PABS is backed by around 100 LMICs, including India, which represent nearly 80% of the world's population and have suffered the limitations of voluntary goodwill arrangements, opposition comes from developed countries, especially the European Union (EU), which are home to some of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies

The price of survival

A case in point is the infamous vaccine apartheid witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which left LMICs grappling with prolonged vaccine shortages even as high-income countries, according to the People's Vaccine Alliance, hoarded more than half of global vaccine supplies despite representing only around 13-14% of the world's population.

The COVAX initiative delivered just around a fifth of its promised doses by mid-2021 and WHO's COVID-19 Technology Access Pool, meant to facilitate the sharing of intellectual property and manufacturing knowhow, drew a blank. Subsequent mutations of the COVID-19 virus resulted in an estimated 1.3 million preventable deaths, delayed recoveries and a whopping $28 trillion, as per the IMF, in global economic losses.

COVID-19 isn't the only example: the life-saving Ebola drug, Inmazeb, whose estimated per-treatment cost based on procurement data came to a jaw-dropping $6,900, was effectively beyond the reach of those survivors, in one of the world's poorest regions, who had helped make the treatment a reality through their blood samples and antibodies. When a new outbreak struck in September 2025, killing, as per the WHO, nearly 70% of those infected, all that the WHO could do amid rich countries stockpiling the drug for "emergencies" was to wait for limited donations from the manufacturer.

More recently, the bilateral health compacts signed by the U.S. with more than 15 African nations require them to share pathogens for 25 years in return for just five years of diminishing U.S. funding and nearly no commitments on product access.

PABS seeks to legally link sample-sharing to guaranteed benefits, making it mandatory for pharmaceutical manufacturers to provide 20% of real-time VTD production to the WHO during declared pandemics, at least half of it for free and the remaining at reasonable prices. Besides making yearly monetary contributions, manufacturers would also need to transfer technology, build capacity and enable broader production in developing countries through licences.

Technical gaps

Recent Intergovernmental Working Group negotiations in Geneva, while narrowing certain technical gaps, have not been able to address fundamental disagreements around binding obligations on benefit-sharing, intellectual property and data traceability. With another round of negotiations slated to begin on April 27, the window to secure a meaningful agreement is closing fast. Pushing ahead with a partial framework would undermine global health cooperation and institutional trust, compelling developing countries to settle for asymmetrical health deals.

While PABS is backed by around 100 LMICs, including India, which represent nearly 80% of the world's population and have suffered the limitations of voluntary goodwill arrangements, opposition comes from developed countries, especially the European Union (EU), which are home to some of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies.

Proponents of PABS want tighter, enforceable rules and contractual provisions to govern the sharing of samples and benefits, whereas opponents favour voluntary mechanisms over binding contracts, arguing that the added bureaucracy and complexity arising from legal mandates could stifle research and innovation. This, despite existing global systems – from environmental treaties to public health frameworks – already relying on standard legal instruments to balance access with incentives.

The EU's current model of allowing anonymous access to pathogen sequence data without adequate transparency or traceability is opposed by PABS proponents, who say mandatory user registration is critical for greater accountability. The EU contends that doing so will impede the openness and interoperability of data systems. However, the likes of the European Genome-Phenome Archive, and the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID), often publicly defended by many EU countries, already use secure access and trackable data-sharing systems.

Advocates of PABS want it to be made mandatory for companies and labs to let WHO and its programmes use their products and technologies developed using shared pathogen data under non-exclusive licences so that multiple players can produce and distribute those products and technologies. In contrast, the EU wants this arrangement to be left to the discretion of individual companies.

Supporters of PABS want all agreements to be made public and seek assured representation for civil society in negotiations and systemic oversight. The EU is averse to any such mechanisms. Additionally, PABS supporters want the scope of benefit-sharing to be extended beyond pandemics to include WHO's more frequent PHEIC (public health emergencies of international concern) declarations.

The middle ground

The EU's position is also being challenged by global health groups including the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, Third World Network and Public Citizen. It is evident, however, that both sides ultimately seek certainty. While developing countries are seeking guaranteed, enforceable benefits, high-income countries, largely at the behest of their pharmaceutical industries, are looking for a legally predictable system that does not weigh down their innovation economics with obligations.

A middle ground for countries to share in the benefits of better pandemic preparedness could be a tiered system with lower obligations during normal times, stronger commitments during pandemics, and a global fund to support poorer countries, sparing manufacturers a disproportionate burden.

For a start, essential elements of access, utilisation, benefit-sharing, IP, onward transfer, dispute resolution and non-compliance could be written into the Annex now and detailed model contracts could be fleshed out over a mutually agreeable timeframe. A mechanism could be worked out to reward, not coerce, manufacturers who share IP.

Developed countries must reassess the impact of their resistance on their credibility with the Global South, while developing countries must show greater flexibility on timelines and payment terms in return for firm commitments on the essentials.

From zoonotic threats such as mpox, to engineered pathogens, dual-use biotech and AI-driven cyberbiosecurity risks, the next pandemic may not be too far off. When they meet again in Geneva, both sides must approach the resolution of the PABS impasse as a matter of political will rather than mere bargaining, for no one is safe until everyone is.

(Harsh Kabra is an independent journalist and commentator. harshkabra@gmail.com)

Liver disease often goes unnoticed in people with type 2 diabetes

Athira Elssa Johnson

A large proportion of people living with type 2 diabetes develop fatty liver, and nearly one in three may have underlying liver fibrosis without symptoms. Latest evidence published in *The Lancet*, from a large multinational European study of over 30,000 adults shows that undiagnosed liver fibrosis is relatively common, with about 4.6% having significant liver stiffness and 1.6% confirmed cases.

The study found strong links with metabolic factors such as obesity and type 2 diabetes, along with harmful alcohol use, with fatty liver disease accounting for over 90% of cases.

On the lookout: Liver disease in type 2 diabetes often remains undetected for years. Screening is therefore essential. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Fat accumulation to fibrosis

Type 2 diabetes is characterised by insulin resistance, which disrupts the metabolism of glucose, fat, and proteins. And one of the consequences is fat accumulation in the liver, known as hepatic steatosis.

According to Arulprakash S, clinical lead and senior consultant, Medical Gastroenterology and Hepatology, SRM Prime Hospital, this fat may remain harmless in some individuals. While it can infect liver cells in some cases,leading to inflammation (steatohepatitis), which can gradually progress to fibrosis and cirrhosis. He notes that genetic predisposition plays a role, and also not everyone living with fatty liver develops advanced disease.

Vaibhav Patil, consultant, Hepatology and Medical Gastroenterology, Liver Disease and Transplantation, Rela Hospital, explains that insulin resistance is the central cause. It leads to fat deposition in liver cells and attracts inflammatory cells, causing chronic inflammation and fibrosis. Additional contributors include high free fatty acids causing lipotoxicity, glycated proteins, and disturbances in gut microbiota. Metabolic conditions such as obesity, dyslipidaemia, and hypothyroidism further accelerate liver damage by increasing the flow of harmful fats to the liver. These conditions often coexist with diabetes and act together in disease progression.

Late symptoms

Liver disease in type 2 diabetes often remains undetected for years. As doctors point out, slow liver injury does not produce symptoms and is usually picked up only through investigations such as blood tests, ultrasound, or FibroScan.

Dr. Vaibhav Patil notes that the liver has a high functional reserve and lacks pain receptors, which delays the appearance of symptoms even in the presence of fibrosis.

Leelavathy Kandaswamy, Senior Consultant Diabetology and Endocrinologist, Apollo Speciality Hospitals, explains that patients may feel normal despite ongoing damage. Symptoms such as fatigue, jaundice, abdominal swelling, or fluid accumulation typically appear only in advanced stages, when significant liver injury has already occurred.

Need for routine screening

Fatty liver is often reversible with strict glycaemic control and lifestyle modification. However, fibrosis represents a more advanced and largely irreversible stage of liver damage.

Doctors emphasise that fibrosis, not just fat accumulation, is the key determinant of long-term outcomes. It can lead to cirrhosis, liver failure, and hepatocellular carcinoma. They highlight the entity of "lean NASH," particularly seen in developing countries, where individuals who are not overweight still develop fatty liver due to genetic predisposition and visceral fat deposition. This underscores that being thin does not eliminate risk.

Fibrosis can also arise from other causes, including chronic viral infections such as hepatitis B or C, drug-induced liver injury, heavy metal toxicity, and genetic conditions like Wilson disease or haemochromatosis.

Screening is therefore essential. Studies show that up to 35% of people with type 2 diabetes may have fibrosis without symptoms. Tests such as liver function tests, fibrosis scoring systems (including FIB-4), and non-invasive tools like FibroScan help detect early changes. Monitoring measures such as the CAP score can assess fat content in the liver.

Early detection helps in timely interventions, including weight management, improved blood sugar and lipid control, and medications such as pioglitazone or GLP-1 receptor agonists like semaglutide. Doctors therefore emphasise that integrating liver screening into routine diabetes care can help prevent progression to advanced disease and reduce the risk of long-term complications, including liver cancer.

(athira.elssa@thehindu.co.in)

The declaration urged the government to extend the SIR process period and appeal period from three months to six months.

'Karnataka Declaration' at protest convention seeks SIR reset

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The confederation of progressive organisations of Karnataka issued a "Karnataka Declaration" at an anti-SIR protest held at Freedom Park on Thursday. The declaration urged the government to extend the SIR process period and appeal period from three months to six months, to set up voter assistance centres in all gram panchayats and wards to assist people in the process. The confederation also implored the State to revise voter rolls and prepare a proper "State voter list" through the State Election Commission, instead of relying solely on the Central list, and to convene gram sabha and ward sabha meetings after preparing the draft list, where the list must be presented publicly, corrections reviewed, and the final list prepared.

"Officials must be instructed to issue residence certificates/ identity nativity cards swiftly and without harassment," it urged. Sheikh Faridul Islam from "Vote Adhikar Manch", which represents the 9.1 million "disenfranchised voters in West Bengal", along with several other affected Bengali migrant workers, participated in the convention. The speakers condemned the disenfranchisement of eligible voters from electoral rolls and urged that such incidents not be replicated in Karnataka. "The People of Bengal carried out a heroic struggle against SIR. 3.4 million people have filed written appeals before tribunals. Yet, pushing them aside with the assurance 'you can vote in the next election'... This convention condemns this naked destruction of democracy with deep distress and anger. We the People of Karnataka stand with Bengal," it read.

Man found dead

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 45-year-old man allegedly died by suicide after jumping from the 13th floor of an under-construction apartment building in Sampigehalli Police Station limits on Thursday night.

The deceased has been identified as Vivekananda, 45. He had visited the apartment complex on the pretext of inspecting a flat for purchase.

He later went to the 13th floor and allegedly jumped.

(If you are in distress or having suicidal tendencies, please reach out to these 24/7 helplines: KIRAN at 1800-599-0019 or Arogya Sahayavani at 104 for help.)

Migrant workers face travel chaos amid polls

The rush led many passengers to miss scheduled trains and buses, others were forced to pay exorbitant fares or make last-minute arrangements

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With Assembly elections in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, several parts of Bengaluru witnessed severe congestion at railway stations and bus terminals over the past few days as many migrant workers made plans to return home to vote. The rush resulted in many passengers missing scheduled trains and buses, while others were forced to pay exorbitant fares or devise last-minute travel arrangements amid limited transport availability.

Railway stations in the city, including KSR Bengaluru and Yeshwanthpur, saw packed platforms, with most trains to West Bengal running fully booked.

Passengers on their way to Chennai to vote in the Assembly elections. PTI

Several migrant workers said they were compelled to make uncertain travel plans by booking waitlisted tickets and travelling in groups, often adjusting with a single confirmed berth.

Fear of SIR exclusion

Anuja, a migrant worker from West Bengal who works as a domestic help in an apartment complex in Konanakunte, said fear surrounding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls had heightened anxiety among workers.

"We have been told by people back home that if we do not go back and cast our vote, our names may be removed from the voter list. If that happens, it will create problems for us in the future. Because of this fear, I have decided to go back to my village at any cost," she said.

"About 40 of us from Bengaluru, working as construction labourers and house help, are planning to travel together. Train tickets are simply not available. One person has managed to book a ticket that is still not confirmed, and three of us are planning to travel on that single ticket. We are risking everything just to make sure we can vote," she added.

Meanwhile, Railway officials said that while a few summer special trains had been introduced, these were not specifically intended to cater to election related travel.

"The summer special trains are announced every year to manage holiday traffic. These are not dedicated elections only services, and availability remains limited due to high overall demand," an official said.

Bus stations crowded

The situation was equally difficult for those travelling to Tamil Nadu. Bus stations at Shantinagar and Silk Board junction had been crowded on Wednesday with both government and private buses operating at full capacity.

Many passengers said that they were unable to board buses despite waiting for hours. Kuppamma, a domestic worker from Tirunelveli who works in Jayanagar, said that she was unable to travel for voting owing to the severe shortage of seats. "I have been voting regularly for the past 30 years, but this is the first time I could not do so. Every bus I tried, government or private, was full. Trains were also unavailable. I waited for two days, but there was no way to travel," she said."

Tamil Nadu voted in a single phase on Thursday, while West Bengal's Assembly elections will be held in two phases – the first took place on Thursday and the second will be held on April 29.Counting is scheduled for May 4 in both States.

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Extract of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31, 2026 (₹ in Crore except EPS)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended	Year Ended
		31.03.2026	31.12.2025	31.03.2025	31.03.2026	31.03.2025
		Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited	Audited
1.	Total Income from Operations	3,839.50	3,539.43	4,151.73	14,924.26	16,516.29
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax, exceptional and / or extraordinary items)	18.94	(69.10)	64.22	149.18	1,702.89
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional and / or extraordinary items)	18.94	(69.10)	64.22	149.18	1,702.89
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional and / or extraordinary items)	27.28	(22.88)	66.50	128.28	1,240.19
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after Tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after Tax)].	124.27	(8.99)	49.52	160.29	1,185.44
6.	Equity Share Capital [Face value of share ₹ 10/- each].	4,657.00	4,657.00	4,657.00	4,657.00	4,657.00
7.	Other Equity				1,121.80	1,805.73
8.	Earnings per Share (EPS) (of ₹ 10/- each)*					
	Basic (in ₹) :	0.06	(0.05)	0.14	0.28	2.66
	Diluted (in ₹) :	0.06	(0.05)	0.14	0.28	2.66

***EPS is not annualized for the quarter.**

Notes :

1. The above are the extracts of the detailed formats of the Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31, 2026 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31, 2026 are available on the Stock Exchange websites **(www.nseindia.com / www.bseindia.com)** and Company's website **www.bcclweb.in** and can also be accessed by scanning the Quick Response Code provided underneath.
2. The above financial results have been reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee and thereafter approved by the Board of Directors at their meetings held on April 22, 2026. As required under Regulation 33 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 as amended the Statutory Auditors have audited the above financial results for the year ended March 31, 2026.
3. The Financial Results of the company have been prepared in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 ("Ind As") prescribed under section 133 of the Companies Act. 2013. (For detailed notes refer to the websites mentioned in Note 1 above).

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Debanuj Debnath
Company Secretary & Compliance Officer

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Dr Soumya Swaminathan
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Dr Prakash M
Associate Professor, School of Public Health, SRM Institute of Science and Technology

Dr J Amalorpavanathan
Member - State Planning Commission, Govt. of Tamil Nadu

Athira Elssa Johnson
Senior Reporter, The Hindu
Moderator

To register, visit:
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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of drug offenders detained under PIT-NDPS Act

34 Shimla district police have detained 34 accused under the PIT-NDPS Act so far this year as part of a crackdown on habitual drug traffickers. A repeat offender was recently held under preventive detention provisions to curb further narcotics-related activities, officials said. ANI

Temperatures soar past heatwave threshold in Odisha

44 In degrees celsius. The mercury touched 44 degrees Celsius at two locations — Jharsuguda and Talcher — in Odisha as heatwave conditions persisted, with 24 places recording temperatures of 40°C or above and authorities issuing advisories and school schedule changes. PTI

Infosys posts strong quarterly profit growth for Jan.-March quarter

21 in per cent. IT major Infosys reported a 21% increase in net profit to ₹8,501 crore for the January-March quarter, driven by growth in key sectors, even as the company flagged global economic uncertainties and projected modest revenue growth of 1.5-3.5% for FY27. PTI

Africa projected to face major fuel shortfall risk by 2040

86 In million tonnes. Africa is projected to face a fuel shortfall of 86 million tonnes by 2040, according to a report by the Africa Finance Corporation. It warned that the continent's heavy reliance on imported refined fuel leaves it vulnerable to global supply disruptions. AFP

SAI allocates funds for Thomas, Uber Cup teams

1.45 In ₹ crore. The Sports Authority of India has sanctioned over ₹1.45 crore in financial and logistical assistance for a 34 member Indian contingent participating in the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals in Denmark. ANI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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What are safer fireworks alternatives?

How loud do fireworks at Thrissur Pooram get? What do India's noise rules permit? What risks do fireworks pose to hospitals? What is cold spark technology? Are they safer than traditional fireworks? Why are noiseless alternatives not widely used yet? What transition is being proposed for Thrissur Pooram?

EXPLAINER

Divya Gandhi

The story so far:

As hundreds gathered to experience the grand fireworks display at the Thrissur Pooram festival in Kerala last year, a heavily caparisoned and disoriented elephant, Uttoly Raman, suddenly ran amok, leaving 42 people injured. The previous day, another parading elephant, Chirakkara Sreeraman, had attacked its mahout. "Elephants, like other animals, get disoriented not just by decibel levels, but also by the structure and frequency of noise," said Manjari Jain, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, IISER Mohali. In response to an RTI request filed by *The Hindu*, the Kerala State Pollution Control Board stated that noise levels during the 2025 festival peaked at as much as 122.4 decibels in one area. This was just under the Central Pollution Control Board's 'Noise Standards for Firecrackers', which prohibit "the manufacture, sale or use of fire-crackers generating noise level exceeding 125 [decibels]... at 4 metres distance from the point of bursting."

Firefighters douse a blaze at a fireworks unit in Mundathikode, Thrissur, Kerala on April 21. PTI

What are the risks to hospitals?

As for permissible ambient noise levels, the National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network recommends 45-55 decibels in residential areas and 40-50 decibels in "silence zones" such as hospitals and educational institutions – far lower than the legal cap of 125 decibels for fireworks.

Eminent social scientist Rajan Gurukkal has raised concerns about the proximity of Thrissur's fireworks to hospitals, especially those with neonatal intensive care units, and their impact on infant brain development. "The way the festival is conducted in Thrissur violates ICU norms. Many facilities do not have soundproof windows, and the district hospital is minutes away from the fireworks," he told *The Hindu*. The World Health Organization notes that noise pollution is the third most hazardous environmental threat to human health, after air and water pollution.

What are the noiseless alternatives?

"It is time to go noiseless," said Professor Gurukkal, on April 21, when 13 people were killed and 40 injured in a blaze at a fireworks manufacturing unit in Mundathikode near Thrissur. "We do not need to reinvent the wheel, cold spark technology is available, but not yet scaled up."

This technology, unlike traditional fireworks, uses a chemical combustion reaction of very fine granulated metal alloy powders of titanium and zirconium, explained Samrat Ghosh, Assistant Professor at the Frugal Innovation Lab for Societal Benefit, Department of Chemical Sciences.

The 'cold sparkular', for instance, is a gun-like device equipped with a heater and a fan. The heater warms the fine alloy powder to increase its activation energy, while the fan blows the fine granulated metal alloy powders out. "When these fine powders eject out of the barrel of the hand-held gun, the heated fine powder reacts with the oxygen in the air and undergoes a rapid exothermic reaction that emits light with a sparkler-like effect as seen in traditional fireworks – but with no noise," Dr. Ghosh explained.

They can prevent burn injuries. While traditional sparklers emit temperatures of around 1,200 °C, cold sparkulars and cold anars operate at 60-100°C, he added.

Though already available commercially online, these pyrotechnics remain expensive – a single 'cold anar' can cost around ₹400 – and are largely manufactured in China. "We have plenty of scope in India as the technology is well known and one can indigenously make these nano-powders," Dr. Ghosh said.

Prof. Gurukkal emphasised that what is needed is "professionalism and management." Contemporary stage technologies show that we can create in-house spark fountains and colourful spark-circles on the floor, he said, adding that televisions routinely employ cold spark systems that generate bright, upward jets of sparkling light without explosive combustion, heavy smoke and high-decibels "but giving the same, if not a superior, visual effect".

"It is possible to deploy arrays of dozens or hundreds of spark units across open grounds, arranged linearly, radially, or in clusters, with sequential triggering of waves, expanding bursts, and cascading effects," he said. These could even be mounted on temporary towers to extend the visual field, "creating the illusion of vertical expansion into the night sky".

What is the way forward?

Delhi, which celebrated its loudest Diwali in three years, could also benefit from cold spark technology. As for Thrissur, Prof. Gurukkal said there should be an incremental transition strategy in Kerala, but that it would be ideal "to start with the Thrissur Pooram, the greatest among occasions that use parasols of intense air pollution with sound and smoke".

Initial integration of large-scale cold spark-based displays should be tested in Thrissur, the district famed in the country for its high-quality air, he said. "It is the responsibility of the Thrissur Corporation to substitute the existing method."

THE GIST

- Noise levels at Thrissur Pooram peaked at 122.4 decibels — close to the legal cap — raising concerns over risks to animals, hospitals, and infant brain development.
- Experts call for a shift to noiseless alternatives like cold spark technology, which can deliver similar visual effects without high decibel levels, smoke, or burn injuries.

What Telangana's survey shows about caste inequality

When caste is measured, the gap is not incremental but exponential, with SC and ST households structurally locked in despite economic growth

Srinivas Goli

For decades, Indian policymakers have relied on income as the measure of disadvantage. A landmark government report from Telangana, based on one of the largest population surveys ever conducted in the country, offers a stark correction: when caste itself is measured, the gap is not incremental – it is exponential.

The Telangana Socio-Economic, Educational, Employment, Political and Caste (SEEEPC) Survey 2024, a cross-sectional, census-scale enumeration covering 97% of the State's population (35 million people), introduces a rigorous Composite Backwardness Index (CBI). The findings, published in a government report funded by the Government of Telangana with no external conflicts of interest, show that Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) are not merely "disadvantaged." They are structurally locked in.

A gap too wide to ignore

Using 57 main questions along with several sub-questions, administered through household visits across the State, the survey calculated CBI scores on a scale where higher values indicate greater backwardness. The results are stark.

An SC community scores 96 out of 100 on the backwardness index, while a general caste (GC) community scores 31. In other words, by the government's own multidimensional metric – covering education, occupation, living conditions, assets, and social integration – the average SC household is three times more backward than the average upper-caste household. The gap is not a margin of error; it is a chasm.

Perhaps the most politically consequential finding concerns scale. The survey assessed 242 distinct castes across Telangana. Of these, 135 castes, a staggering 67% of the State's population, recorded a CBI score higher than the State average.

The report explicitly notes that "not all backward castes are equally backward." There is significant heterogeneity within the Backward Classes category: some groups score close to SCs, while others approach GC levels. This finding destroys the utility of treating any broad category, SC, ST, or BC, as a monolith. Policy cannot be one-size-fits-all.

Telangana is among India's fastest-growing States. Yet the SEEEPC Survey 2024 proves that economic growth and caste inequality operate on separate tracks

Inequality across spaces and systems

The survey disaggregates outcomes across rural and urban areas. While urbanisation improves absolute outcomes, a Dalit family in Hyderabad may fare better than one in a remote village. However, urban-rural disparities persist sharply in education, income, and housing quality. Upper castes disproportionately benefit from city growth, while SC/ST households remain concentrated in urban informal settlements with amenities barely superior to rural slums.

The survey also identifies high educational backwardness among ST communities, even relative to SCs. This suggests that tribal communities face distinct barriers, including geographic isolation, language, and cultural distance from mainstream institutions, that require targeted, not generic, interventions.

What the data demands from policy

The Independent Expert Working Group behind the SEEEPC report is unequivocal in its recommendations. The single most crucial lever is education – but not merely access.

"Strengthening government school systems and ensuring quality education is crucial," the report states. This is a pointed rebuke to the current policy obsession with school enrolment (which has improved) over learning outcomes (which remain abysmal for disadvantaged castes). Without functional, high-quality government schools in SC/ST-majority areas, the cycle of occupational segmentation documented in the SEEEPC report will continue across generations for some more time.

The report is not without limitations. The data are self-reported, which may introduce bias: respondents could under-report discrimination or misrepresent social practices. Moreover, certain forms of untouchability were not explicitly captured, suggesting that the extent of social exclusion may be even greater than documented.

Growth without equity

Telangana is among India's fastest-growing States. Its GDP is rising, its cities are expanding, and poverty rates are declining.

Yet the SEEEPC Survey proves that economic growth and caste inequality operate on separate tracks. An SC household remains three times more backward than a GC household, not because of income but due to structural exclusion embedded in education, labour markets, and social systems.

The message to policymakers is simple: income-based targeting has failed the math test. Only caste-sensitive, multidimensional, and rigorously targeted interventions, beginning with government schools, can begin to close a gap of this magnitude.

(Srinivas Goli is an Associate Professor of Fertility and Social Demography at the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai. Views are Personal)

A pattern of inequality

The SEEEPC Survey reveals wide gaps across castes, occupations, and outcomes

Table 1. Composite Backwardness Index (CBI) by social group

Social group	Mean CBI score	Relative backwardness (vs. General Castes)
Scheduled Castes (SC)	96	3.1x more backward
Scheduled Tribes (ST)	95	3.0x more backward
Backward Classes (BC)	86	2.7x more backward
General Castes (GC)	31	Reference (1.0x)

Table 2. Population share of backwardness

Category	Number of castes	Share of State population
Castes more backward than State average	135	67%
Castes less backward than State average	107	33%

Table 3. Occupational distribution by social group

Occupation	SC/ST	BC	GC
Agricultural labour	High	Moderate	Low
Informal work	High	Moderate	Low
Salaried/formal jobs	Low	Moderate	High

Aurobindo Marg chokes after double-decker opening

However, signals on the Marenahalli stretch and beyond, towards Silk Board Junction, recorded a marginal decrease in vehicle volume

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

Persistent honking, pedestrians struggling to cross the road, and traffic police relentlessly blowing whistles: these were the scenes witnessed at Aurobindo Junction in South Bengaluru on Thursday evening after the much-awaited double-decker was fully opened for vehicular traffic.

As a Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) inspection had revealed, the Aurobindo Junction turned into a bottleneck.

A motorist who used the flyover on Thursday says that the commute time from Silk Board to Ragigudda reduced by at least 8 to 10 minutes. SUDHAKARA JAIN

High volume

The concern is the elongated congestion tail on Aurobindo Marg (11th and 24th Main Roads), which increased as the traffic police prioritised the movement of vehicles on Marenahalli Main Road and users of the double-decker flyover.

"The volume of vehicles on Marenahalli Main Road will be higher during peak hours, so the green signal time for the stretch has to be prioritised and extended," the officer said.

The high volume of vehicles is mainly because the flyover directly connects to the Outer Ring Road and South Bengaluru. Employees of companies located along the tech corridor, who reside in the southern and southwestern parts of the city, use the flyover on a daily basis.

This is why congestion at Aurobindo Junction increased when a portion of the flyover opened in 2024, according to the traffic police.

Now, with the opening of the other side of the flyover, congestion has seen a marginal spike.

"The congestion length on Marenahalli Road also increased due to the high volume of vehicles descending from the down ramp of the double-decker.

Even on the flyover, congestion of about 50 to 100 metres from the exit point was observed during the evening peak hours on Wednesday," the traffic officer told *The Hindu*.

Another senior traffic police officer explained that signals on the Marenahalli stretch and beyond, towards Silk Board Junction, saw a marginal decrease in vehicle volume.

However, he acknowledged that 11th and 24th Main Roads will be a major concern, as those stretches are also used by a substantial number of commuters.

Mixed reactions

Akhilesh K., a daily commuter who uses 24th Main Road, said that he usually cannot pass the signal in one green phase. Now, he would have to wait through two signal cycles.

"The problem is that many commuters will now try to find alternative routes to bypass Aurobindo Junction, which means they will start using residential lanes, leaving those roads clogged," he said.

However, commuters using the double-decker flyover are satisfied. Ranjan Yadav, who used the flyover, said that commute time from Silk Board to Ragigudda has reduced by at least 8 to 10 minutes.

"Yes, there will be congestion at Aurobindo Junction, but it is acceptable because it eliminates waiting time at Silk Board Junction and the other four signals along the stretch," he said.

On Thursday morning, a few commuters were confused after taking the flyover and were seen making U-turns in the middle of it. Police officers said that during peak hours, personnel were deployed to guide commuters.

Metro services to start early for TCS World 10K on April 26

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Metro services, which usually begin at 7 a.m. on Sundays, will start earlier from all terminal stations in view of the marathon

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has announced an early commencement of metro services on April 26 (Sunday) to facilitate the movement of participants of the TCS World 10K Bengaluru.

According to a press release issued on Wednesday, services, which usually begin at 7 a.m. on Sundays, will start earlier from all terminal stations.

Schedule

The marathon is scheduled to begin from the Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw Parade Grounds.

Trains from Bommasandra will commence operations at 3 a.m., followed by services from Madavara at 3.20 a.m., Whitefield (Kadugodi) and Silk Institute at 3.30 a.m., and Challaghatta at 3.35 a.m.

The services will operate at 15-minute intervals for the first hour.

Subsequently, trains will run every 30 minutes until 7 a.m. to ensure continuity of service.

After 7 a.m., regular Sunday schedules will be followed.

Shift to metro boosts health, travel satisfaction: Biocon-IISc study

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A survey conducted by Biocon Foundation in partnership with IISc has revealed an improvement in quality of life and health parameters among people who used metro for commuting.

The early results were revealed by Biocon chief Kiran Mazumdar Shaw during the launch of Corporate Commute Nudge, a programme spearheaded by Toyota Mobility Foundation and WRI India under the STAMP: Nudging Commuter Behaviour initiative, supported by Electronics City Industries Association, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) and Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), to encourage Biocon employees to shift from private vehicles to public transport through seamless integration with the city's metro and bus networks.

The foundation, which partnered with IISc to undertake an independent assessment of the Yellow Line, conducted an employee survey and a community survey, which analysed pre- and post-Yellow Line scenarios. K. MURALI KUMAR

The foundation, which partnered with IISc to undertake an independent assessment of the Yellow Line, conducted an employee survey and a community survey, which analysed pre- and post-Yellow Line scenarios. The community survey, based on 600 valid baseline responses, shows stark differences in health outcomes.

It claims that hypertension was reported among 15% of inactive commuters, compared to just 0.6% of rigorously active metro users. Similarly, diabetes prevalence stood at 18% among inactive commuters, versus 0.6% among active metro commuters. Breathing problems were rare among metro users, while 4.6% of non-commuters reported such issues. Metro users also reported zero heat stress and the lowest exposure to PM2.5. In contrast, non-AC bus users experienced moderate heat stress and exposure, while two-wheeler riders reported high heat stress and the second-highest levels of air pollution exposure.

It was also found that commuters who used the metro accumulated an additional 50-75 minutes of walking per week. "We also looked at mental wellbeing and accessibility. What we could see was travel satisfaction (among metro users), with the commute smoothness and predictability being the dominant factors impacting mental wellbeing. Likewise, physical accessibility and the freedom from isolation (previously underserved areas now better connected by the metro) are equally strong well-being predictors," said Ashish Verma, professor at IISc.

Key barriers to realising the full benefits of metro were recorded as high fares, missing last-mile access, lack of pedestrian safety, insufficient secure parking at stations and long gaps between trains. It was found that commuters for whom metro stations were more than 2km away revert to private vehicles.

Ms. Shaw said that the foundation was looking at how it could be solved for the Biocon-Hebbagodi station. "We are trying to partner with the B-PAC to facilitate pink autos and EV autos to take people from the station to their destinations," she said. Under the Corporate Commute Nudge initiative, Biocon employees can create profiles on the Tummoc app, enabling them to plan, track and pay for journeys across metro, bus and feeder services. The platform thus allows commuters to seamlessly plan their journeys, making travel more efficient and time-saving.

Bundling IPL tickets with metro to be norm

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Highlighting the success of clubbing metro tickets with IPL tickets, City Police Commissioner Seemanth Kumar Singh and BMRCL project director U.A. Vasanth Rao noted that it has now been made a policy to bundle metro travel with tickets for all cricket matches in the city. Noting that 22,000 people used Metro to attend IPL matches, Mr. Singh added that more than 70% of the parking space was vacant during the games.

"Now we have made it a rule that wherever such big functions happen, we will try to bring the crowd to the nearest metro station," he said.

Under the initiative, around 6,000 metro tickets have been sold so far and nearly 500 employees are using available feeder services daily.

Inter-State gang posing as BSNL staff held; equipment worth ₹7 lakh recovered

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru City Police have arrested an inter-State gang that posed as BSNL staff to steal telecom infrastructure, recovering stolen materials worth approximately ₹7 lakh.

According to the police, a complaint was lodged at Yeshwanthpur Police Station on April 19 by a BSNL official, stating that between April 17 and April 19, unidentified persons had stolen 2,160 modules and 66 meters of copper cable worth ₹2.39 lakh from telecom installations.

Based on the complaint, a case was registered under relevant sections of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property (PDPP) Act, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and the Telegraph Act.

During the investigation, police teams, acting on a tip-off, apprehended three accused from Yeshwanthpur and Malleswaram. The arrested have been identified as Ravi Chauhan, 32, a resident of Meerut, Uttar Pradesh; Sandeep, 23, from Bhawanpur, Uttar Pradesh; and Syed Zahed Hasan, 40, a resident of Sedam in Kalaburagi district

Explaining the *modus operandi*, Yeshwanthpura inspector, Manjunath S., said the accused had travelled from Uttar Pradesh to Bengaluru via Delhi and had rented a house in the city. They operated using a car and wore blue uniforms resembling BSNL staff along with white helmets to avoid suspicion.

One more accused, believed to be from Uttar Pradesh, is currently absconding, and efforts are under way to trace him.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

(Construction Organisation)
E-Tender Notice No. ERS-SG-CN-2026-OT-02
Double Packet System

For and on behalf of The President of India, **The Dy. Chief Signal & Tele-communi cation Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway. Ernakulam,** II Floor, Eastern Entry. Ernakulam Junction, Karshaka Road, Kochi-682 012 invites **e-tenders** for the following work.

Item. No.	Name of the work			
1.	Provision of indoor and outdoor Signalling and Telecommunication arrangements at Neyyattinkara station for Stage-I & Stage-II works in connection with doubling of Track between Thiruvananthapuram Central & Kanniyakumari stations.			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Sl.No.	Approximate Cost of Work (₹)	Bid security (₹)	Last Date of e-submission of Tender/Date of Opening of the Tender	Period of Completion (Months)
1.	24,11,79,681.85	48,23,600/-	12/05/2026 15:00 hrs	8 (Eight) months

Note: 1. Value of tender inclusive of GST as per GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time for the supply and services by the tenderer.
2. Visit **www.ireps.gov.in** for detailed terms and conditions and corrigendum if any.

Deputy Chief Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Ernakulam-682 016

No. U-12025/20/2026-H-III (FTS-8398731)
Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
(Hospital-III Section)
Kartavya Bhavan, New Delhi

Subject: Recruitment to the post of Director, North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health & Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong.

Applications are invited for the post of Director, North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health & Medical Sciences, Shillong (NEIGRIHMS) an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, in the pay Level-17 ₹. 2,25,000/- (Fixed) (inclusive of NPA) subject to maximum of ₹. 2,37,500/-.

The post is required to be filled by the method of deputation (Including short-term contract) /absorption / direct recruitment). The deputation (including short-term contract) /absorption shall be made from Officers of Central /State Governments /Autonomous Organizations / Research Institutions / Universities.

The details of the vacancy regarding eligibility criteria, age limit etc. may be seen on **www.mohfw.gov.in** and **www.neigrihms.gov.in**

Last date for submission of applications is 30 days of date of publishing the vacancy in The Employment News.

Sd/-
(Anurag Tiwari)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
CBC17119/11/0001/2627 **Phone No:011-24013282**

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER -I/II
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL,BENGALURU (DRT-2)
Government Of India, Ministry of Finance,Department of Fiancial Services
4th Floor, Telephone House Builiding Rajbhavan Road Bangalore - 560001

Form No. 14 (See Regulation 33(2))
DEMAND NOTICE
Notice under Sections 25 to 28 of the Recovery of Debts & Bankruptcy Act, 1993 and Rule 2 of Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act, 1961.

RC No. 324/2025 in O.A. No. 1251/2017
KARNATAKA GRAMEENA BANK
V/S. SRI GANGANNA (SINCE DECEASED REP BY ITS LRS)

In the Matter of **(CH) Karnataka Grameena Bank,** Gubbi Branch, Gubbi, Tumkur Dist, Karnataka **... Certificate Holder**
Versus
(CD-1) Sri Ganganna (Since Deceased Rep by its LRs)
Legal Heairs 1: 1 (a) Smt. Kempamma, W/o. late Ganganna, R/at Torehalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Gubbi Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka.
Legal Heairs 1: 1 (b) Sri T. G. Dayananda S/o. late Ganganna, R/at Torehalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Gubbi Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka.
(CD2) Sri T. G. Dayananda S/o. late Ganganna, R/at Torehalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Gubbi Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka.
....Certificate Debtors

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, **Debts Recovery Tribunal, Bengaluru (DRT-2)** in **OA No.1251/2017** an amount of **Rs.22,04,762/-** (Rupees Twenty Two Lakhs Four Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty two Only) consisting of
a) The Defendant has to pay Rs.6,56,321 (Rupees Six Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Three Hundred and Twenty One only) with future interest at 8% p.a. (simple) from the 03.10.2017 i.e, date of filing of the OA 1251/2017 till realization in full
b) The Defendant has to pay Rs.1,79,691/- (Rupees One Lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Six Hundred and Ninety One only) with future interest at 12 % p.a. (simple) from the 03.10.2017 i.e, date of filing of the OA 1251/2017 till realization.
c) The Defendant has to pay Rs.8,33,793/- (Rupees Eight Lakh Thirty Three Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Three only) with future interest at 8% p.a. (simple) from the 03.10.2017 i.e, date of filing of the OA 1251/2017 till realization in full
d) The Defendant has to pay Rs.5,35,929/- (Rupees Five Lakh Thirty Five Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Ninety only) with future interest at 8% p.a. (simple) from the 03.10.2017 i.e, date of filing of the OA 1251/2017 till realization.
e) The Defendant has to pay Rs.4,028/- (Rupees Four Thousand Twenty Eight only) with future interest at 8% p.a. (simple) from the 03.10.2017 i.e, date of filing of the OA 1251/2017 till realization and cost of **Rs.45,000/-** (Rupees Forty Five Thousand Only) has become due. If the sale proceeds are not found sufficient the defendant No. 2 personally and his other assets are liable to be proceeded against the defendant, However, the liability of teh Defendant No. 1(a) limited to the estate inherited by him from the deceased Ganganna.
2) You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.**3)** You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing. **4)** You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, for further proceedings.**5)** In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will be liable to pay:(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate/ execution proceedings.(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processess and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on **01.12.2025.**
Sd/- Recover Officer ,
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Bangalore (DRT-2)

NB: Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the II Schedule to the Income Tax Act 1961 read with RDDBFI Act 1993 which is reproduced below:
"Rule 16 (1) Where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representatives or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debts Recovery Officer, not shall any Civil Court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money. (2) Where an attachment has been made under this Schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other moneys contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment".3) You are also liable to disclose your assets both movable and immovable to this Tribunal along with the Income Tax Returns of last 5 years.

Timings
BENGALURU

FRIDAY, APR. 24
RISE 06:02 SET 18:33
RISE 12:28 SET 00:45

SATURDAY, APR. 25
RISE 06:02 SET 18:33
RISE 13:25 SET 01:34

SUNDAY, APR. 26
RISE 06:01 SET 18:34
RISE 14:18 SET 02:16

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	37	21
Bengaluru	36	24

Bengaluru Today
36°C The weather will be dry. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
35°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

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THE HINDU
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19-year-old worker kills newborn minutes after delivery

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a shocking incident, a 19-year-old woman allegedly killed her newborn baby shortly after giving birth inside a factory toilet in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

The accused, an operator at the Foxconn facility in Devanahalli, a key assembler for Apple, is said to have delivered the baby – a premature male baby – inside a toilet on Wednesday. According to the police, the woman was delivered of a premature male baby after a seven-month pregnancy and allegedly slit the newborn's throat and disposed of the body.

The incident came to light when the housekeeping staff found the toilet clogged and found the newborn with its throat slit, and alerted the police. The Vishwanathapura police rushed to the spot and tracked down the accused based on the CCTV footage.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the delivery was sudden and occurred while she had gone to use the toilet. Authorities suspect that the woman, who is unmarried, committed the act fearing social stigma.

The accused from Yadgir had developed an infection post-delivery and was admitted to a hospital for treatment. The police have registered a case of murder and are awaiting her recovery before taking her into custody for further investigation.

Police's quick response helps save cab driver

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Talaghattapura police helped save the life of a 25-year-old cab driver who allegedly attempted suicide inside his car on Wednesday evening.

The incident occurred around 6:10 p.m. in Banashankari. The man contacted the 'Namma 112' emergency helpline. The alert was relayed to Hoysala-156 patrol personnel attached to Talaghattapura Police Station, who reached the spot within five minutes. They then shifted him to a hospital.

(If you are in distress or having suicidal tendencies, please reach out to these 24/7 helplines: KIRAN at 1800-599-0019 or Arogya Sahayavani at 104 for help.)

FULL CONTEXT

Real equity gap in higher education

Equity in higher education institutions is more constrained by gaps in representation in employment than in admissions; the UGC regulations focus largely on anti-discrimination and complaint-resolution mechanisms, but do not adequately address these structural gaps

According to data submitted by the UGC to a parliamentary panel and the Supreme Court, 378 complaints were reported by Equal Opportunity Cells and SC/ST Cells in 2023-24 across 704 universities and 1,553 colleges. GETTY IMAGES

Anish Gupta

The new University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)) Regulations, 2026, have sparked considerable debate and protests within academic circles and among the general public, both in support of and in opposition. Although the Supreme Court has stayed their implementation, observing that they are vague and potentially open to misuse, the issue has raised several important academic questions – particularly regarding the empirical aspects of equity, discrimination, and caste-based crimes.

An uneven ladder

Employment lags behind admissions, while limited data shapes understanding of discrimination and crime.

Table 1: Category wise non teaching, teaching staff and admissions in 2023-24

Non-teaching staff	**SC**	**ST**	**OBC**
Group A	5.9	3.9	7.9
Group B	10.7	5.2	12.1
Group C	10.5	6.2	14.4
Teaching staff	**SC**	**ST**	**OBC**
Professor	8.8	2.2	7.2
Associate Professor	9.2	2.9	9.1
Assistant Professor	12.5	6.1	19.3
Admissions in First year	**SC**	**ST**	**OBC**
UG	13.6	5.6	25.6
PG	10.5	16.5*	24.5
M.Phil.	16.7*	11.7*	29.7
Ph.D.	11.4	20.0*	25.9

Source: UGC Annual Report 2023-24

Table 2: Crime/ atrocity against SC/ST in India in 2023

Social group of victim	Social group of accused	Crime incidence	% of total crime	Crime rate	Charge-sheeting rate	% Population
Crime against SC	Others	57,789	0.9	28.7	81.2	SC- 16.6
	SC/ST	Na	Na	Na	Na	
Crime against ST	Others	12,960	0.2	12.4	79.5	ST- 8.6
	SC/ST	Na	Na	Na	Na	
Crime against Others	Others	Na	Na	Na	Na	Others- 74.8 Na
	SC/ST	Na	Na	Na	Na	
Crime against all	All	62,41,569	100	270.3	72.7	100

Source: Crime in India 2021-23, NCRB

Equity in HEIs

One of the most important measures of equity is the representation of various social groups in employment and education at different levels within HEIs. A look at **Table 1**, based on the UGC Annual Report 2023, reveals four key trends in Central universities.

First, compared to the constitutionally mandated reservations for SC (15%), ST (7.5%), and OBCs (27%), the share of these social groups across all levels of teaching and non-teaching jobs is lower. Second, this gap is larger at higher levels of employment than at lower levels. Third, unlike in employment, representation in admissions at all levels (UG, PG, M.Phil, and Ph.D.) for all social groups is more or less close to the reservation mandated by the Constitution. Fourth, encouragingly, ST representation in admissions is 1.5 to 2.7 times higher than the mandated level, except at the undergraduate level, where it is slightly lower.

Overall, this suggests that, at the macro level, inequity is more of a problem in employment than in admissions.

It is worth noting that gaps in admissions can be filled within a year, but the same is not true for employment. Even with the strict implementation of reservations, bridging this gap will take many years, as it depends on the retirement of employees who were appointed when reservations were not properly implemented.

Data on discrimination in HEIs

Comprehensive data on discrimination-related complaints across all social groups in HEIs is not available, limiting objective and comparable analysis. However, according to data submitted by the UGC to a parliamentary panel and the Supreme Court, 378 complaints were reported by Equal Opportunity Cells (EOCs) and SC/ST Cells in 2023-24 across 704 universities and 1,553 colleges.

Since a breakdown of EOC complaints by social groups is unavailable, a holistic assessment is constrained. Nonetheless, even if one assumes that all EOC complaints are caste-based, the total number of such cases amounts to approximately 3.7 per one lakh students and about 0.16 per institution (assuming an average enrolment of 4,000 students per HEI). Moreover, the disposal rate for complaints related to SC/ST issues was as high as 90%, an important and often overlooked point.

NCRB data on caste-based crimes

Data on crimes against SCs and STs are published by the NCRB, which classifies all crimes committed against these groups by "Others" as caste-based crimes, which is not accurate. Moreover, the NCRB reports only those crimes against SCs and STs committed by individuals outside these communities. It does not provide disaggregated data on crimes occurring within SC and ST communities, as well as comparable data for other social groups. This limits the scope of comparative analysis.

According to NCRB data for 2023, crimes against SCs and STs committed by "Others" account for about 0.9% and 0.2% of total recorded crimes, respectively. However, given the limitations of the available data, it may be assumed that the distribution of crimes committed against different social groups broadly reflects their share in the population.

Assuming that crime distribution broadly reflects population shares, SCs (16.6%) and STs (8.6%) would account for 16.6 and 8.6 crimes out of every 100, respectively, with the remaining 74.8 attributed to Others.

It follows from this proportional exercise that the likelihood of a person belonging to SC/ST committing a crime against someone belonging to the SC is roughly 52 times higher than that of a person from other groups. Similarly, the likelihood of a person belonging to SC/ST committing a crime against someone belonging to the ST is roughly 125 times higher than that of a person from other groups.

If we go by the assumption that the share of crimes against SC and ST exceeds their population share, any such excess would necessarily be reflected in crimes occurring within SC/ST communities, since the share of crimes committed by Others is already known and fixed.

Issue of underreporting

An important caveat is the underreporting of crimes, especially against SC and ST, by Others. However, even if one assumes, purely hypothetically, that the actual number of such crimes is 100 times the reported figure (an extremely high multiplier), the likelihood of crimes against SC and ST committed by members of their own communities would still be 3.2 and 14.3 times higher, respectively, than those committed by Others.

Moreover, chargesheeting rates in cases involving crimes against SC and ST are 81.2% and 79.5%, respectively, compared to an overall average of 72.7%. This suggests comparatively stronger procedural follow-through in cases involving crimes against SC and ST than in Others.

These results are not surprising, as crimes tend to occur among individuals in close social and geographic proximity. Conversely, a very low crime rate against a particular social group, compared to the average, may indicate social segregation rather than harmony.

Problems with the regulations

The regulations suffer from three major shortcomings. First, the analysis suggests that the primary challenge in HEIs lies in achieving equity in employment – particularly at leadership levels – rather than in admissions or reported discrimination.

Second, the regulations seem to confuse equity with anti-discrimination.

Equity entails providing targeted support to ensure fair outcomes, whereas anti-discrimination focuses on identifying and penalising discriminatory conduct, typically through complaint-resolution mechanisms. Interestingly, the title refers to "promotion of equity" and the preamble emphasises both equity and eradication of discrimination, the operative provisions, particularly points 4 (Duty to Promote Equity), 6 (Equity Helpline), and 7 (Measures for Promotion of Equity), are confined largely to the latter. Third, the regulations appear to assume the complete elimination of crimes based on identities. While desirable, this is unrealistic without a broader reduction in overall crime. Overly stringent measures may even risk reinforcing social segregation.

What can be done?

Efforts should focus on promoting equity by increasing the representation of reserved categories in employment in HEIs, especially at higher levels, while fostering integration across social groups. Over time, growing interactions may lead the rate of crime against SC/ST to converge with the average crime rate, which could initially result in some increase in reported cases against SC/ST. Therefore, reducing the general crime rate, rather than addressing crimes in isolation, is essential for strengthening social cohesion and building a more inclusive environment.

Since HEIs shape societal values, the UGC should promote measures that foster mutual respect and understanding, while curbing student politics that encourage factionalism and teach young minds to exploit every opportunity for narrow or petty gains.

(Anish Gupta teaches Economics at the Delhi School of Economics. The author acknowledges the inputs received from Prerona Baruah of IEDS, Noida)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

How is the word 'Wednesday' pronounced? (Dr. N. Ananthkumar Babu, Visakhapatnam)

Native speakers of English do not pronounce the 'd' in this word. 'Wedn' is pronounced like the word 'when'. The second 'e' is silent and the 's' that follows is like the 'z' in words like 'zip', 'zoo', and 'zing'. Many native speakers of English pronounce the 'ay' in 'day' like the 'i' in words like 'fit', 'hit', and 'sit'. In fact, this is how they pronounce the 'ay' in Monday, Tuesday. I guess this explains how they get the lines of Solomon Grundy to rhyme. Some native speakers, however, pronounce the final syllable like the word 'day' – like we Indians do.

For native speakers of English, 'Wednesday' consists of only two syllables. The first syllable is 'wenz' and the second 'day'. The stress is on the first syllable.

What is the meaning of the word 'honcho'? (C. V. Srinivasamurthy, Chennai)

Honcho is slang for 'boss'. When you refer to someone as being the 'head honcho', you mean that he/she is in charge. The word is mainly used in American English. The first 'o' is pronounced like the 'o' in 'stop', 'pop' and 'top', and the second 'o' is like the 'o' in 'go', 'so', and 'no'. The stress is on the first syllable. The word should not be used in formal contexts.

Is it ok to use 'How come'? (L. Surendran, Hospet, Karnataka)

Americans use the expression 'How come' in informal contexts to mean 'why'. It is very common to hear Americans say:

How come you didn't come to the party? (Why didn't you come to the party?)

How come John isn't here? (Why isn't John here?)

How come you didn't get the job? (Why didn't you get the job?)

Although 'How come' is frequently used in informal speech, it is not acceptable in formal writing.

What is the meaning and origin of 'to eat humble pie'? (P. Balachander, Kanyakumari)

When someone eats humble pie, they behave in a manner which makes it clear to everyone that they are willing to admit they were wrong about something.

After losing the elections, he was made to eat humble pie.

The pie in the original expression was 'umble pie' and not 'humble pie'. The 'umbles' consisted of meat from the heart, liver and gizzard of deer.

The servants ate these portions of the meat because they were not considered to be the choicest meat. The best portions were reserved for the nobles. Therefore, a person who ate 'umble pie' was one in an inferior position; one who had to humble himself before someone who was superior.

Published in The Hindu on May 30, 2000

THE DAILY QUIZ

After a day of hectic polling in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, here is a quiz on Chief Ministers from these States

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Srinivasan Ramani

QUESTION 1

West Bengal's first Chief Minister was a veteran freedom fighter with roots in the Anushilan Samiti and he served very briefly before being succeeded by one of the State's longer serving CMs. Name them both.

QUESTION 2

When Jyoti Basu – the Chief Minister who served the longest tenure in West Bengal – was first elected in the State Assembly, he was just one of three MLAs elected on the Communist Party of India ticket. Who among the other two, was elected from Darjeeling?

QUESTION 3

Ajoy Mukherjee, who served as West Bengal CM three times in the late 1960s and early 70s, founded a party that launched the political career of a future President of India. Name the party and the future President.

QUESTION 4

When Tamil thespian Sivaji Ganesan fiercely raged against social orthodoxy in the film, Parasakthi, he was orating dialogue written by a prolific screenwriter who also served as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for many years across terms. Name him.

QUESTION 5

Name this Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu who was a school topper, went on to win the State government's top merit scholarship and could have joined law college, but chose a career in cinema.

Visual Question:

Identify this popular CM from Tamil Nadu who played a major role in instituting the mid-day meal scheme in schools in Tamil Nadu.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The original idea was conceived in 1922 to celebrate the works of which famous Spanish author? **Ans: Miguel de Cervantes**
2. Why was April 23 chosen as the English Language Day? **Ans: The date is traditionally observed as both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare**
3. What does the term 'incunabula' refer too? **Ans: Books, pamphlets, and broadsides printed in Europe before 1501**
4. What are the terms used for: (i): a quote at the beginning of the book or chapter and (ii): illustration facing the title page? **Ans: Epigraph and Frontispiece**
5. What is it a technical term for? **Ans: Lung disease caused by fine silica dust**
6. From which Indian languages do the English words bandicoot, catamaran and candy come? **Ans: Bandicoot from Telugu, catamaran from Tamil and candy from Sanskrit**
7. Which were the last two letters added to the modern English alphabet? **Ans: U and J**
Visual: This a page from the oldest known dated printed book in the world. **Ans: Diamond Sutra**
Early Birds: Prem raj P. | Tito Shiladitya | Piyali Tuli | Sukdev Shet | Aaryan Dhaker

Word of the day

Chortle:
a soft partly suppressed laugh

Synonyms: giggle, chuckle, cackle

Usage: *She began to chortle at the silly joke.*

Pronunciation:
newsth.live/chortle

International Phonetic Alphabet: /tʃɔːtəl/

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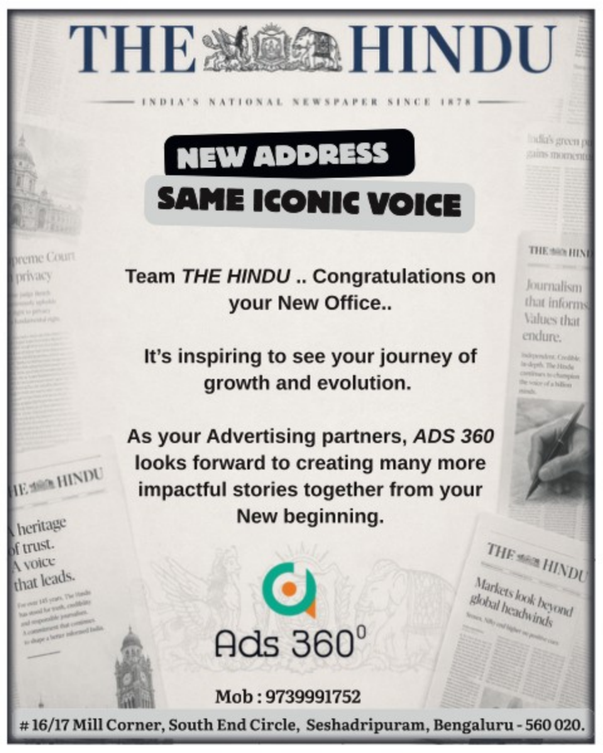
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'Regular checks vital for low-cost air quality sensor efficiency'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While low-cost air quality sensors offer an affordable and promising way to expand pollution monitoring in countries of the Global South, such as India, their readings could vary widely unless properly calibrated for local conditions, shows a study by Bengaluru-based Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy's (CSTEP).

While low-cost sensors can play a valuable role in improving air quality monitoring in countries like India, their effectiveness depends on regular evaluation. K. MURALI KUMAR

Titled *Performance Evaluation of Multi-pollutant Air Quality Sensors at Indi-SET, Bengaluru, India - First Edition; A Short- and Medium-Term Evaluation*, the report emphasises that the effectiveness of such sensors depends on regular evaluation.

As many as 48 multi-pollutant sensor devices from different manufacturers were evaluated at the India Air Quality Sensor Evaluation (Indi-SET) Facility at CSTEP's Air Quality Lab.

During the evaluation, differences in pollutant concentration readings were observed not only between manufacturers, but also among devices from the same manufacturer. In some cases, sensors showed inconsistent or faulty readings over time, reinforcing concerns about long-term reliability.

To address these challenges, the study developed locally tailored correction methods that significantly improved sensor performance. This especially held true for key pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide and ozone.

Given this, the study recommends that low-cost sensors must be calibrated before deployment. As environmental factors such as weather and pollution patterns differ from place to place, calibration models should reflect these realities to ensure accurate readings. Further, India's diverse climate and pollution conditions require region-specific calibration, calling for the establishment of more testing and training facilities across the country. Sensor accuracy also declines with use, and calibration models may become outdated as conditions change.

CET-2026 begins smoothly with 96% attendance on first day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The first day of the Common Entrance Test (CET-2026), conducted by the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) for admission to engineering and other professional courses, went off smoothly on Thursday.

According to a press statement by KEA executive director H. Prasanna, 96% of the candidates attended the Physics and Chemistry examinations held across 745 centres in the State.

He appreciated the staff for successfully guiding candidates who were struggling at the last minute without hall tickets and also those who had mistakenly gone to the wrong examination centres, ensuring that they were still able to write the exam.

At the district level, the exams were monitored through CCTV cameras under the leadership of the respective Deputy Commissioners and zilla panchayat CEOs. At the command centre set up in the KEA office in Bengaluru, CCTV footage from examination centres in Bengaluru and Kalaburagi districts was reviewed and monitored, he added.

More than 100 candidates, who had not applied earlier due to various reasons , submitted their applications the day before and appeared for the exam.

For the first time, KEA, on humanitarian grounds, set up a special examination centre in Bengaluru city at the last minute to help such candidates who came forward with genuine issues.

The Hindu EducationPlus Career Counselling to begin tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 24th edition of *The Hindu* EducationPlus Career Counselling is set to begin on April 25, 2026, covering nine locations across nine cities in Karnataka. Organised by *The Hindu*, this landmark event continues its legacy of guiding students and parents.

Designed as a one-stop platform for academic and career counselling, the event brings together renowned educationists, career experts, and top institutions to provide personalised guidance on UPSC exam preparation and CET and NEET counselling, conducted by officials from the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA).

There is guidance provided on career opportunities in diverse fields including Arts, Science, Commerce, Law, Management, Engineering, Medicine, CA and Cost Management, Fashion Designing, Animation, Performing Arts, Journalism, Architecture, and more. Whether students are exploring conventional paths or emerging career trends, this forum will offer the clarity, direction, and expert advice they need.

The Hindu Education Plus - 24th Year Career Counselling 2026

Region	Date	Venue	Address
Davangere	April 25, 2026 Saturday	Bapuji MBA campus	Bapuji Academy of Management and Research, Lake View Campus, S. S. Layout B Block, S.S. Layout, Shamanur Road, Davangere - 577004
Vijayapura	May 2, 2026 Saturday	BLDE Engg. campus	BLDEA's V.P. Dr. P.G. Halakatti, College of Engineering and Technology, Ashram Road, Adarsh Nagar, Vijayapura - 586101
Tumakuru	May 3, 2026 Sunday	Birla Auditorium	Birla Auditorium, Siddaganga Institute of Technology, B.H. Road, Tumakuru - 572103
Bidar	May 9, 2026 Saturday	Shaheen Parvaaz Hall	Shaheen Parvaaz Hall, Sapna Landmark, Opposite Vishal Functional Hall, Airport Road, Bidar
Mangaluru	May 9, 2026 Saturday	Sri Sudeendra Auditorium	Canara High School Main Campus, Kodiabail, Mangalore - 575003
Bengaluru	May 9, 2026 Saturday	SJRC Auditorium	Sri Jagadguru Renukacharya College of Science, Arts and Commerce, # 9, Race Course Road, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru - 560 009
Kalaburagi	May 16, 2026 Saturday	Poojya Doddappa Appa Sabha Mantapa	Poojya Doddappa Appa Sabha Mantapa, Sharnbasva University, Vidya Nagar, Kalaburagi - 585103
Hubballi	May 16, 2026 Saturday	KLE Society's Bio Technology Auditorium	KLE Society's Bio Technology Auditorium, BVB College of Engineering & Technology Campus, Vidyanagar, Hubballi - 580031
Mysuru	May 16, 2026 Saturday	Sahukar Chennaiah Auditorium	Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering, P.B. No. 206, Gokulam, 3rd Stage, Mysuru - 570002

Event schedule
Registration is from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. The programme is from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Entry is free and open to all students and parents. Contact 9448160126 / 944887181/ 9731400992 for more information or check Link : https://newsth.live/CET2026ED

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Contractor moves HC, alleges 9-15% bribe demand for garbage tender

The petitioner has sought a direction from the court to file an FIR against the officials over the alleged demand for a bribe

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A serious allegation of a demand for illegal gratification, ranging from 9% to 15% of the annual bid amount, allegedly made by two senior State officials for awarding a tender, has been raised in a petition before the High Court of Karnataka by a private contractor who was the successful bidder for one of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) tender packages in Bengaluru city.

The petition has been filed by S.N. Balasubramaniam, the proprietor of Nelaanjanaa Enterprises and General Secretary of the Bangalore Mahanagara Swachahte Matthu Lorry Malikara Hagoo Guthigedarara Sangha, which represents garbage contractors and lorry owners.

The petitioner has sought a direction from the court to register a First Information Report (FIR) against IAS officers Karee Gowda, Chief Executive Officer of the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd. (BSWML), and Tushar Girinath, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Urban Development Department (UDD), over the alleged demand for a bribe, as no action was taken on his complaint submitted to the State Chief Secretary on March 11.

'False information'
However, State Advocate General (AG) K. Shashi Kiran Shetty has objected to the petition being entertained, even for the issuance of notice, contending that it was filed with false information regarding a 'meeting' with Mr. Gowda, who is alleged to have made the demand for illegal gratification, on March 10, 2026, when Mr. Gowda was in Delhi and not in Bengaluru.

The AG said that both the officials, against whom the allegations were made, are "honest officials."

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum, who briefly heard arguments on the petition, adjourned further hearing till April 24 as the petitioner's advocate said the petitioner would file an affidavit about his "meeting" with the official.

'Cut of 9 to 15%'
The petitioner said he submitted his bid for Package-2 of the Shantinagar SWM tender on December 31, 2025, and was declared the successful bidder on January 2, 2026, after the evaluation of technical and financial bids. On January 3, the Deputy General Manager (DGM)-1 of BSWML called for price negotiations as the petitioner's bid amount was higher than the estimated tender value, to which the petitioner responded on January 6.

Meanwhile, a few unsuccessful bidders filed petitions on January 27 before the appellate authority (Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department), questioning the tender award process. The appellate authority, on March 4, dismissed the petitions and upheld the award of the tender to the petitioner.

Subsequently, it has been stated in the petition that Mr. Gowda called the petitioner for a discussion on March 10 and, under the guise of that meeting, stated that certain "formalities" were required to be complied with by the government and the board committee of BSWML.

'Formalities'
When the petitioner sought clarification on the meaning of "formalities", Mr. Gowda is alleged to have told him that, as per the policy of the board – which included Mr. Girinath – for the tender to be finalised, 3% of the bid amount quoted by the petitioner for a period of seven years had to be paid to the board members; a further 3% had to be paid to Mr. Girinath and his department, the Urban Development Department (UDD); and another 9% had to be paid to the government as illegal gratification for finalisation of the tender and issuance of the work order. On March 25, the demand was reduced to 9% from 15% with a cancellation threat, before the tender was unlawfully cancelled on the same day, the petitioner has alleged.

Govt. hospitals expand joint replacement care reducing referrals to private hospitals

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Government hospitals in Karnataka are emerging as centres for advanced orthopaedic procedures such as Total Knee Replacement (TKR) and Total Hip Replacement (THR), following a series of reforms aimed at strengthening infrastructure, capacity and access, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said on Thursday.

Addressing presspersons, he said the State has witnessed a clear shift towards public hospitals performing these surgeries, reducing dependence on private facilities and ensuring affordable care closer to patients' homes. The reforms were initiated after data from 2023-24 showed that only 35% of the 1,709 joint replacement surgeries were carried out in government hospitals.

"This led to high out-of-pocket expenditure and long-distance travel for patients. Our focus was to build capacity within the public system," Mr. Rao said.

The number of government facilities offering these procedures has since increased from 17 to around 40 across the State, including district hospitals, medical colleges and taluk hospitals, significantly improving access, particularly in underserved regions, Mr Rao said.

Mentorship programme
To build in-house expertise, a structured mentorship programme has been introduced under which senior orthopaedic surgeons are deputed to government hospitals to perform surgeries and train local doctors.

As a result, new centres have become functional and government surgeons are now beginning to perform procedures independently. Since the reforms, 99 surgeries have been conducted under mentorship, the Minister said. "The modified Online Referral System now ensures clinical scrutiny before surgery approval, while financial support has been strengthened with reimbursement for surgeries in government hospitals increased from 75% to 100%, along with improved procurement of implants and equipment," he said.

Dinesh Gundu Rao

Helpline

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Department had earlier launched a 24×7 free second opinion helpline under the Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust (SAST) to assist patients advised to undergo TKR and THR procedures. People can call the toll-free number 1800 425 8330, available in Kannada and English.

Management rooms for treating heatstrokes

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In view of rising temperatures, district and taluk authorities are setting up dedicated heatstroke management rooms across healthcare facilities as part of preparedness measures.

The Minister said such rooms are being established at district hospitals, taluk hospitals and community health centres, with basic arrangements,

These include fans and ice cubes being put in place and Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) made readily available.

Private hospitals
The impact of these measures is reflected in the rise in the number of surgeries performed in government hospitals from 633 in 2023-24 to 1,119 in 2025-26, with referrals to private hospitals dropping to minimal levels, he said.

"Patients who earlier travelled 300 to 500 km can now access treatment closer to home. Most procedures are free, significantly reducing financial burden," Mr. Rao said. He said that the reforms have had a significant impact in the Kalyana Karnataka region.

CCB books three in ₹1.8-crore job scam, 55 aspirants cheated

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch officials on Tuesday registered an FIR against three men allegedly involved in a major job fraud, cheating over 55 job aspirants on the pretext of providing employment and making away with ₹1.8 crore. Based on the complaint filed by one of the victims, identified as N. Surendranath Rao Mirajkar, the police charged V.K. Ramesh, D. Raghavendra, and B.S. Devikumar, charging them for cheating and fraud.

The complainant stated that he was introduced to V.K. Ramesh through acquaintances who claimed he had strong connections in government departments and assured employment for multiple candidates.

Trusting these claims, an initial amount of ₹51 lakh was allegedly paid for 21 job aspirants. Over the years, a total of ₹1,83,40,000 was reportedly collected from 57 individuals, with around ₹48 lakh directly transferred to Raghavendra's bank account.

Despite repeated follow-ups, the promised jobs were never provided.

The complainant has now urged authorities to initiate legal action against the accused and help recover the cheated amount.

FIR over impersonation of Bengaluru civic chief; GBA chief also targeted

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A case has been registered against an unknown person for impersonating a senior civic official on WhatsApp by misusing his photograph and messaging other officials, even as a similar attempt to pose as the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) chief commissioner has also come to light.

According to the complaint, an unidentified individual used the photograph of Bengaluru East Corporation Municipal-commissioner D.S. Ramesh (IAS) as a WhatsApp display picture and posed as him to contact officials.

Fraudsters have allegedly impersonated GBA chief commissioner M. Maheshwar Rao as well, prompting the GBA to lodge a complaint.

Two delivery executives held for harassing woman

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Yelahanka police on Wednesday arrested two delivery executives for allegedly behaving indecently and harassing a young woman on a public road in North Bengaluru.

The incident occurred on Tuesday, in the afternoon. The victim was walking near Kogilu Main Road when two unidentified youths approached her and allegedly misbehaved with her. A video of the incident later surfaced on social media, prompting the police to register a case. Notices were issued, and on Thursday, both accused appeared before the Yelahanka police. During the interrogation, reportedly confessed to their involvement in the incident.

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation
Central Offices, Purchase Department, Shanthinagar, Bangalore - 560027. PH: (091)-080-22221321(E:224)
FAX:(091)-080-22223424, "e-mail:cosp@Ksrtc.org"
Website: www.ksrtc.org

No. KST/CO/S&P/SSD/96/2026-27 Date: 22.04.2026

"e"-Auction Notice

Scrap Materials available at our 16 Divisions & Regional Workshops, Kengeri/Hassan of KSRTC will be sold through e-Auction to be conducted by M/s. Rashtriya e Markets Services Pvt.Ltd (ReMSL) (A State Government Undertaking).
The e-Auction schedule is as under: -
Scrap material e-Auction Start from **28.04.2026**
The interested Bidders may log onto **www.scrapauctions.neml.in** for further details and registration. They may also contact M/s. ReMSL at below mentioned address for needful clarification.
Address: -
M/.s Rashtriya e Markets Services Pvt. Ltd Karnataka State Agricultural Marketing Board,
No. 16, Rajbhavan road, Bangalore- 560 001.
Contact phone Nos: 8970314455, 7625015646, 9742492299, 9742079246
KSRTC Contact phone Nos: +91 7760990221/224
Sd/-
DIPR/CP/329/Zen/2026-27 CONTROLLER OF STORES & PURCHASES

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. PROJECT-SWR-TL-CMY_30MVA Dated : 18-04-2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Design, Supply, Construction, Testing and Commissioning of : **(i)** 1 No. of 66kV Terminal Bay at 220/66kV Chintamani Sub-station **(ii)** 66 kV 630Sqmm Single Circuit UG Cable from 66kV/11KV Chintamani S/S to 220/66kV Chintamani Substation for a route length of 0.030 km. **(iii)** 66kV line from 66kV Chintamani S/S to 220kV Chintamani Sub-station for a route length of 0.150 km.	Rs. 2,55,81,085.46

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 14-05-2026**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date
Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer/Project Bengaluru
PUB/53/AAF/PRB/SWR/2026-27
Download the RailOne app for easy ticket booking, PNR status, and more railway services.
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
No. El/81/2/TRD/BKN/E-Tender/2019 DT. 21.04.2026
1st Corrigendum to E-Tender Notice No. 02-TRD-BKN-E-Tender-2026-27
E-tender notice No. 02-TRD-BKN-E-Tender-2026-27, scheduled to be opened on **12.05.2026**, has been cancelled due to technical reasons.
Sr. Div. Electrical Engineer/ TRD & GSU, Bikaner
586-PS/26

Change of Name
I ARCHANA KUMAR (New Name) W/o Kumarswamy C V, residing at Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore -560098, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that i have changed my name from **ARCHANA ANANTHAPADMANABHA RAO** (Old Name) to **ARCHANA KUMAR** (New Name). In future i will be known and called by my new name i.e. **ARCHANA KUMAR,** sworn before notary.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our client **Smt.Indira devi W/o Mr.Ramesh Patel Kumar** is intending to purchase the schedule property from **Smt.Subbalaksmamma @ Subbamma W/o Mr.Seetharamu;** person/s objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our clients shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that Piece and parcel of the land bearing Sy.No.62/8 [Old No.62/1] measuring 0.2 Guntas out of 0.19 guntas situated at **M.Hosahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk Bangalore Urban District** and bounded on:
East by : Land of Varalakshamma, West by : Land of Sugunamma, North by : Govt. Road, South by : Land of Venkataswamappa.
C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M : 9845846428, 9108784843, 080-48658774
E- Mail: rvlaw.76@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our client **Mr.Rajendra sirvi S/o Mr.Ramlal** is intending to purchase the schedule property from **Smt.varalakshmi @ varalakshmamma W/o Mr.Venkatesha;** person/s objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our clients shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that Piece and parcel of the land bearing Sy.No.62/9 (old Sy.No.62/1) measuring 0.2 Guntas out of 0.19 guntas situated at **M.Hosahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk Bangalore Urban District** and bounded on:
East by : Land of Bayamma, West by : Land of Subbamma, North by : Govt. Road, South by : Land of Venkataswamyappa.
C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M : 9845846428, 9108784843, 080-48658774
E- Mail: rvlaw.76@gmail.com

DEPARTMENT OF MINORITY WELFARE
Directorate of Minorities
No.16C, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Bhavan, Miller's Tank Bund Road, Vasanthnagar, Bengaluru - 52.
Website: **https://dom.karnataka.gov.in**
Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi
Applications are invited for free admissions to 1st year Pre-University course in Minority Morarji Desai Residential Pre–University Colleges / Moulana Azad Model Pre-University running under the Directorate of Minorities for the year 2026-27.
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಅ.ಸಂ.ನಿ/ಶಿ.ವಿ/ಪ.ಪೂ/ಸಿಆರ್–01/2026–27 **Date:** 23.04.2026

NOTIFICATION
Applications are invited for free admission into first year PUC for the academic year 2026-27 to Minority Residential Pre–University Colleges/ Moulana Azad Model Pre- University Colleges under the Directorate of Minorities.

Timeline
Date for submission of online applications starts from: 24.04.2026.
Last date for submission of online applications: 16.05.2026.

APPLICATION PROCESS
Interested Parents/Students can apply directly online through Directorate of Minorities Website
Website for application: -
https://dom.karnataka.gov.in

ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION
1. 75% are reserved for students belonging to Minority communities viz., Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis.
2. 25% seats are reserved for students belonging to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Class.
3. Students should have passes SSLC/ Equivalent exam.
4. Student should be a domicile of Karnataka State.
5. Total family income should not be more than 2.50 Lakhs.
6. 4% seats have been reserved for specially abled students.

Instructions:- Parents/ Students can contact respective Minority District Office, Taluk Minority Information Center, Near By Minority College Principal or Minority Welfare Department Helpline Number 8277799990 for further information.

Sd/-
Director
Directorate of Minorities, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/338/MAA/26-27

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Aditi D/O, Bannanje Gopalakrishna R/o 366, 9th Main, Jayanagara Hbcs, Turahalli, Bangalore - 560061 have changed my name to Aditi Upadhya for all purposes.

I, hitherto known as Gangadhar G S alias Gangadhar Gulannavar Somappa S/O Somappa Gurupadappa Gulannavar , R/O # 7, Gurukrupa, 13th Cross, Vinayaka Temple Street, Near Murali Poly Clinic, Peace Layout, Aravind Nagar, Bangalore North, Bangalore, Karnataka, 560084. have changed my name and shall Gangadhar Somappa Gulannavar.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Shanta S D/o Shankarayya Swamy Saidapur R/o 12-3-158 1st Floor, 3rd Main Behind Plot No 12, Rajendra Gunj, Raichur- 584102 have changed my name to Preethi Jayakumar for all purposes.

EDUCATIONAL

VACANCIES
NATURE CONSERVATION Foundation, (Research Centre affiliated with the Manipal Academy for Higher Education, MAHE), invites a fully funded Ph.D. position focusing on plant community ecology. Candidates must have 55% aggregate marks in Master's and must hold valid UGC–NET (including JRF)/CSIR–UGC NET (including JRF)/GATE or applying for DST–INSPIRE fellowship. Detailed requirements, eligibility, application form and admission procedure are available at https://www.ncf–india.org/. Completed applications must be received by 5th May 2026.

SITUATION VACANT

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Fax : 0831-2420173, (College) Phone : 0831-2421464. Fax : 0831-2403126,
E-Mail : belgaum.bims@gmail.com Website : www.bimsbelgaum.org

No. : B.I.M.S./G.N.L.-2/61/2026-27 Date : 22-04-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Director, Belagavi Institute of Medical Sciences Belagavi The Tender Invitation for **BIMS, College Canteen Space on Rent basis Tender,** Tender for Annual Maintenance for Operation and Maintenance of 1210 (1000+210) KLD Capacity ETP (Effluent Treatment Plant) STP (Sewage Treatment Plant) **UGD System at BIMS Belagavi and Kitchen Outsourcing Tender at BIMS Belagavi** as per K.T.P.P. Act 1999 & Rules 2000 in Two Cover System there under.

Sl. No.	Tender Notification	Description of Tender	Tender Value (Approximate) (Rs. In Lakhs)	Downloading of Tender Document
01	BIMS/GNL-2/CANTEEN TENDER/67/2026-27 DATE : 21-04-2026	Tender Invitation for College Canteen at Basement Floor, BIMS Belagavi.	Rs. 5.40	KPP-Procurement Portal
02	BIMS/GNL-2/ETP-STP TENDER/70/2026-27 DATE : 21-04-2026	Tender for Annual Maintenance for Operation and Maintenance of 1210 (1000+210) KLD Capacity ETP (Effluent Treatment Plant) STP (Sewage Treatment Plant) UGD System at BIMS, Belagavi.	Rs.86.40	KPP-Procurement Portal
03	BIMS/GNL-2/61/2026-27 DATE : 22-04-2026	Kitchen Outsourcing Tender at BIMS, Belagavi.	Rs.330.00	KPP-Procurement Portal

The Tenderers Registered under KPP-Procurement Portal can refer Government of Karnataka **KPPP Portal Website : https//www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** to get detailed information about the tender & details of **EMD & Security Deposit or can contact the Director, BIMS, Belagavi** in the working hours to get the information.
Tender inviting authority, Tender Accepting Authority has got powers to cancel any tender or all tenders without assigning any reason.
Sd/- Director,
Belagavi Institute of Medical Sciences, Belagavi.
DIPR/Belagavi/143/Manipal/2026-27

Domestic work and its quest for recognition

Despite Karnataka notifying the Code on Wages Rules under the broader Code on Wages, 2019 framework, aimed at standardising minimum wages, working hours and employer responsibilities, and a draft Domestic Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, domestic workers remain outside the formal workforce, writes **Rishita Khanna**

As per the draft Domestic Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, domestic work will be formalised through mandatory registration of workers, employers and service providers via a digital platform. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

After trying her hand at a garment factory and a showroom job, neither of which fit around her responsibilities at home, Vijayalakshmi, 27, felt that only domestic work allowed her to hold things together.

Married at 18 and widowed five years later after her husband died of kidney failure linked to alcoholism, she now raises two daughters - aged seven and eight - on her own. Having studied only up to Class 7, she is determined that her daughters should not be pushed into the same cycle. Vijayalakshmi works across four homes in Bengaluru's Yeshwanthpur, earning about ₹11,000 a month in total. While there is no fixed pay, hours or leave, it is the only work that allows her to manage her children and still earn enough with her limited education.

Uncounted labour

Like Vijayalakshmi, there are approximately 22 lakh domestic workers in Karnataka, as per surveys done in 2024 by the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). These workers move from one house to another, piecing together work that brings in between ₹4,000 and ₹12,000 a month, depending on how many homes they manage. Yet, despite their sheer numbers, they remain outside formal recognition as "labour" - a basic demand, the workers say, that has gone unanswered for years.

Many domestic workers say the absence of social security is felt most during illness and health emergencies. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

The workforce is overwhelmingly made up of women, many of them widows, single mothers, or survivors of domestic violence, pushed into this work by the 'absence of alternatives'. Most workers come from other districts, particularly from north Karnataka, and many from northern States.

Codes on wages

It was against this backdrop that Karnataka this year moved to notify the Code on Wages Rules under the broader Code on Wages, 2019 framework, aimed at standardising minimum wages, working hours and employer responsibilities.

The State also moved a draft in 2025 proposing a welfare board under the Domestic Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, which seeks to bring the sector into a formal system through mandatory registration of workers, employers and service providers, and a 'tripartite' board to oversee welfare.

What the draft Bill proposes

As per the draft Domestic Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, domestic work would be formalised through mandatory registration of workers, employers and service providers via a digital platform.

A tripartite State Board with representatives from the government, workers, unions, employers, service providers and RWAs would oversee the system, manage a welfare fund and address complaints while the fund would be supported through registration fees, contribution from workers' wages, property tax levies, fines and government grants.

Odd category

But the proposal was neither tabled in the winter session of the Legislature nor taken up in the 2026-27 State Budget, with unions and workers arguing that the problem is with how domestic workers operate and how rules define conditions. Multiple petitions have been submitted to the government regarding a welfare board, with the last one submitted on April 15.

> There is a construction workers' board; recently a welfare board for gig workers was set up by the same government, then why not for domestic workers?
>
> **DIVYA BIRADAR**
> Convener, Karnataka Domestic Workers' Union

"Labour laws were built around the idea of a defined workplace – a factory, an office, with a clear employer, fixed hours and a system the State can regulate," said Satyanand Mukund, State secretary, AITUC, pointing that domestic workers is an odd category, a system that disrupts all of this as it takes place inside homes, generally across multiple households, with informal, verbal arrangements because of which, even fixing and enforcing minimum wages becomes complicated in practice.

The gap, as workers point out, is visible in the law itself. The Code on Wages defines an employer as someone who hires workers within an establishment, and an establishment as a place where any industry, trade or business is carried out. For domestic workers, who have neither a single workplace nor a clearly identifiable employer, this definition leaves them in a grey zone.

Everyday bias

Explaining what this lack of security looks like, Veramma, 37, said in situations where something goes missing or is misplaced, the doubt is instantly on them. "However small it is, they look at us first," she said. Even after 15 years in the same house in Vyalikaval, she is still made to feel like a thief whenever something goes missing. Veramma works in six homes for up to nine hours, earning around ₹12,000 a month from washing vessels and cleaning homes, ₹5,000 of which goes into rent.

Workers across areas spoke of the same pattern – constant suspicion, being denied access to toilets, no concept of leave, and discrimination along caste and class lines.

It is this gap that workers say a welfare board could address. "There is a construction workers' board, recently a welfare board for gig workers was set up by the same government, then why not for domestic workers?" said, Divya Biradar, convener, Karnataka Domestic Workers' Union.

Highlighting their demands, they said the government should set up a welfare board, fix a minimum monthly wage of around ₹30,000 in Bengaluru, and social security benefits such as provident fund, insurance and an increase in pension support.

Pointing at lack of database, Divya added that only when domestic workers are counted, their problems will also count, stressing that a board would mean workers have fixed place to go when things go wrong, whether it is non-payment, harassment, or everyday discrimination that goes unchecked.

There are approximately 22 lakh domestic workers in Karnataka, as per surveys done in 2024 by the All India Trade Union Congress.

Health and survival

Many also said the absence of social security is felt most during illness and health emergencies. Yashoda, 56, a domestic worker in Palace Guttahalli, earns ₹4,500 from two houses but pays ₹5,000 as rent. She shifted to domestic work four years ago after her health gave way, and was earlier working as a construction labourer. Despite working from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and again from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., she said it is government support that sustains her - the Gruha Lakshmi scheme that provides ₹2,000, apart from the widow pensions of ₹1,200 for her 85-year-old mother and ₹800 for herself.

"Income goes into rent. Both my mother and I have health issues, and the pension is not even enough for medicines." She added that beyond this, they depend on subsidised rations. "It is only daal and rice, three times a day, every day, through the BPL card."

"In a formal job, workers have a provident fund – 12% from the employer, 12% from the employee along with insurance contributions of around 4% to 5% under schemes like ESI. Together, nearly 30% of the wage cost goes into building a social security net that covers medical needs, pensions and emergency support," Divya said. She questioned how such a system would apply to domestic work. "Who is the employer here? One house? Five houses? If someone is working in five homes for two hours each, are all five supposed to contribute to PF, and in what proportion? Who is responsible for insurance?" she asked, adding that the entire structure collapses in this sector and zero security remains for the worker.

Highlighting what a day looks like, Lakshmi Devi, a domestic worker in Sanjeevani Nagar, near Sahakar Nagar, who works across four households and one TV shop, said the first thing she is often handed is a plate of leftovers.

Lakshmi Devi starts her day at 7 a.m. and works till 2 p.m. After a short break of about half an hour, she looks after her tea shop from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the same area. Defining her situation better than others, she said she is able to manage her expenses because she does not pay rent and lives in a small 10x20 house. Her son, who has two degrees, works as a gig worker. "But many domestic workers are in far more vulnerable situations," she said.

While a few acknowledged that some families treat them with basic dignity, many said such treatment is rare. "If we talk to them (employers) a little more, they feel we are going to ask for something – either leave or money. So they don't encourage it," Vijayalakshmi said.

Apartments and inequality

Another common thing workers pointed out is that this is experienced more in high-end localities, apartments and gated communities, where they end up doing more work for less pay, with generally no leave.

Some workers say they get three to four days of leave in a month. Others said the salary gets cut upon taking leaves. Most say they don't even ask because taking leave often ends up with fears of replacement. Some neighbourhoods allow 2 to 3 days off, but in many apartment complexes, they said leave is not granted at all.

"Only if my children are sick I take leave because they cut my salary, but then I come back after two days and the sink will be full – everything from those two days just dumped there. Nothing is touched. It will all be waiting for me," said Asha, a domestic worker in Kodigehalli. She said this makes it difficult to take leave, since they know the work only piles up later.

Even this, workers believe, would be addressed if a welfare board comes into effect

Against welfare

However, even before the initiative moves beyond paper, the proposal has already run into resistance from resident welfare and apartment owners' associations

While a few supported the idea of providing domestic workers with security and fair wages, many contested it, saying that any fixed contribution such as a proposed cess, would be a "financial burden" on households.

"The 5% cess that apartment complexes are opposing can change our lives," said Lakshmi Devi, who looks after babies in three households. "In a city like Bengaluru, most families are nuclear. Both parents go to work and leave their children with us. We take care of their homes, their children, we are the support system for many families." She pointed out that many of these families earn in lakhs but hesitate when it comes to contributing towards workers' welfare.

Workers also opposed the current minimum wage calculation formula, which estimates the cost of food and clothing for a family and then adds housing at 10% of that total. They said there is no link between food, clothing and housing costs and argued that if all components are interlinked, any underestimation in one category pulls down the overall wage.

All ready to move

Labour Minister Santosh Lad said the government is ready to move ahead with the proposal, and the Bill is likely to be taken up in the Cabinet in the next two to three weeks.

However, Labour Department officials acknowledged that the Bill had reached the Cabinet stage earlier as well but did not move forward amid internal differences. "There was a push to restrict mandatory registration only to placement and recruitment agencies by ministers, instead of individual employers," a department official said, adding that if it is adopted, it would narrow the scope of the law, keeping only platforms included and not households that employ these workers.

"The proposal is feasible and can be implemented using an app. It is doable," Additional Labour Commissioner G. Manjunath said, adding that contributions could be collected through an online platform in a manner similar to utility payments, where employers register, pay a small cess and access services.

Joint Secretary of Domestic Workers' Rights Union, Karnataka, Geeta Menon said a welfare board model can still work because it moves away from an employer-centric system that does not fit domestic work. She pointed out that expecting individual households to fully shoulder compliance, whether on minimum wages or social security, is neither practical nor enforceable in this sector and that a tripartite contributory model is a better structure.

In such a framework, she said, the worker's access to benefits is not tied to any single employer, but to their registration with the welfare board. "This becomes important in a sector where employment is unstable and spread across several employers. A worker who loses one job or shifts between households does not lose access to social security, because the benefits are linked to the board, not to the employer," she said, maintaining that registration is the most basic step in recognising domestic workers as workers entitled to labour rights and social security.

Copy that!

Srinidhi Bengaluru's *Jerax*, starring Nagagbhushana and Payal Chengappa, is a Kannada fantasy comedy thriller set to premiere on ZEE5

Vivek MV
vivek.mv@thehindu.co.in

Young filmmaker Srinidhi Bengaluru debuted with *Blink* (2024), a complex and gripping time-travel thriller. While his young team was praised for their audacious attempt to crack the sci-fi genre, the film's occasionally confusing narrative left people divided. With *Jerax*, his second directorial, Srinidhi wants to give people no room for complaints, despite choosing another tricky genre. "I want to entertain people," he says about his upcoming fantasy comedy-thriller.

Jerax, the Kannada mini-series set to premiere on ZEE5 from April 24, deals with the quirky idea of a human-cloning machine. In Rayadurga, the protagonist Prakasha's life takes an unexpected turn after a strange discovery at his Xerox shop. Starring Nagabhushana, Payal Chengappa, Manju Pavagadda, Vijaya Prasad, and Om Prakash Rao in prominent roles, the series is produced by Kannada star Dhananjaya.

"The fantasy genre always excites," says Srinidhi, who has also wrapped his next feature film, *Video*. "I went to a Xerox shop in Chamarajpet to get a photocopy of the script of *Video*. That's when I got an idea. What if a Xerox machine could duplicate humans? I started my script of *Jerax* with that line."

What began as a serious fantasy thriller set against a rural backdrop turned into a blend of love story and a fun political rivalry as Srinidhi worked towards writing a wholesome entertainer. "The series will have the fun confusions surrounding mistaken identity. It has the flavour of Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors," he says.

Like *Blink*, the director has striven for a grounded product with a complex genre. "The film required VFX, but we haven't gone overboard with it. I wanted to keep it simple and grounded," says Srinidhi, who adds that writing for web series wasn't entirely challenging when compared to writing a feature film.

"*Jerax* is a mini-series running up to 120 minutes. That's the average runtime of a movie. So, it wasn't very difficult to script a web series. I was aware that each episode had to finish with a cliffhanger. And every 10-15 minutes of an episode should feature a small yet interesting twist," he explains.

Someone like you Srinidhi Bengaluru (below), still from *Jerax*. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Srinidhi was backed by Dhananjaya's banner, Daali Pictures. "Dhananjaya sir liked the script, so much so that he wanted to make a feature out of it. Eventually, the project materialised as a web series," he says. Srinidhi adds that the Kannada audience is slowly warming up to watching web series in their own language.

"People can watch a series on their phone as well. There is no element of taking time out to travel to a theatre for a movie. If we consistently provide them with web series, they will embrace it. As far as I am concerned, I bagged the opportunity because, as a creator, it's yet another storytelling platform for me.

Srinidhi adds that handling two projects (*Video* and *Jerax*) wasn't as hard as he imagined. "We finished the filming of *Jerax* while handling the post-production responsibilities of *Video*. *Jerax* was shot in 22 days. For now, I am excited about working. Thinking too much about the result can make you circumspect. I don't want to do that."

Jerax will premiere on ZEE5 on April 24

STEPOUT

Boys are back in town

The Dramatic Circle Hyderabad (DCH) will stage Neil Simon's *The Sunshine Boys*. The celebrated Broadway and West End comedy, known for its razor-sharp wit and laugh-a-minute pacing, is also a deeply touching exploration of ageing, memory, pride and friendship. *At Jagriti Theatre Whitefield, on April 26 with two shows at 3.30 and 7.30pm. Tickets, priced at ₹500, available on BookMyShow*

Ode to a master

What India Learned to See: From Battala to the Ravi Varma Press and Beyond, an ongoing exhibition marking the iconic artist's 178th birth anniversary, will bring together a rare corpus of oleographs, lithographs, and printed ephemera as a tribute to his legacy. *At Gallery G, Lavelle Road, till May 31, between 10am and 6pm (Mondays closed). Entry free and open to all*

Soul state

MTR Karunadu Swada, a two-day food festival celebrating the flavours of Karnataka is back. Enjoy coastal delicacies, timeless classics and over 75 dishes crafted by home chefs who have used hyperlocal ingredients to revive forgotten recipes and specialties. *On April 25 and 26 at Jayamahal Palace Exhibition Centre. Tickets starting at ₹299 for children, ₹599 for adults available on District*

At the table

Restaurant Week India is back with 55+ restaurants, curated menus, and prepaid bookings

Barry Rodgers
barry.nathaniel@thehindu.co.in

Restaurant Week India (RWI) is back this April after a decade out of circulation, but it returns to a dining culture that no longer needs an introduction.

Running from April 24 to May 3 across Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, and Bengaluru, the 2026 edition brings together over 55 restaurants offering three-course prix-fixe menus

priced at ₹1,500 for lunch and ₹1,800 for dinner. Reservations are mandatory and prepaid, and will be managed exclusively through the festival's official booking platform, developed in partnership with Putting Scene.

Diners can browse participating restaurants and secure tables via the website (rwi.puttingscene.com).

When the festival first took shape in the early 2010s, its appeal was straightforward. A fixed-price, multi-course meal made it easier to try restaurants you might have otherwise saved for a special occasion, or avoided because you did not quite know how to approach them.

What has shifted since then is not just scale, but behaviour.

"What's happened in India's kitchens over the last 10 years is nothing short of a quiet revolution," says Nachiket Shetye, mentor, RWI. "People stopped eating out and started going out, with intent, with curiosity, with opinions," he continues.

That change in the diner has reset the expectations placed on a festival like this. It is something co-founder Gauri Vij, who is also a journalist, acknowledges. "The most exciting thing happening in Indian restaurants right now is that the best of them are setting their own benchmarks," she says.

At Kappa Chakka Kandhari, one of the participating restaurants in Bengaluru, Chef Regi Mathew describes the format as "a bridge between our loyal patrons and first-time diners". "For returning guests, it offers our signatures and curated 'greatest hits'. For new diners discovering the brand during RWI, it serves as an accessible introduction to our cuisine, one that is rooted in Kerala's culinary heritage but interpreted through our lens of contemporary dining," he says.

Tried and tasted Restaurant Week India flips the narrative when it come to eating out. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Warp and weft of a legacy

Loom, Legacy & Landmark is not just an exhibition of saris but also a tribute in silk to a heritage that has endured

Ruth Dhanaraj
ruth.dhanaraj@thehindu.co.in

What do former PM Indira Gandhi, actor Manisha Koirala and the Mysore royal family have in common? They all owned saris woven by Vijayalakshmi Silks.

For every old Bangalorean, Vijayalakshmi Silks has been a landmark on MG Road, one of the very few names holding its own on a stretch where the store fronts keep changing. The family-run sari showroom turns 105 this year, and is observing their anniversary with a one-of-a-kind exhibition.

According to Rohith C Ramesh, managing partner of Vijayalakshmi Silks, as the store's centenary fell during the pandemic, there was no opportunity to commemorate the brand turning 100. "We wanted a fitting event to showcase our history and our strengths. Over the years, we have collaborated not only with the Mysore royal family, but also with a lot of the old families from South India."

"We began looking at what we had crafted for them, and recreated many of those designs. As many as 65 of these heirloom pieces will be on display at Loom, Legacy & Landmark. We conceptualised it as an art exhibit for handloom saris."

Forgotten treasures

Their quest to showcase some of their best work saw the family travel extensively for close to two years, collecting different patterns they had woven over the decades. At Loom, Legacy & Landmark, each sari will be accompanied by a note on its history and provenance as well as the techniques used in its creation.

Rohith recalls an orange Kanjivaram crafted for Maharajkumari Kamakshi Devi Wodeyar, daughter of Maharaja Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar over 60 years ago. Some of the techniques used in the creation of that sari had almost died out in Tamil Nadu.

Kodak moments Vijayalakshmi Silks' early storefront, former PM Indira Gandhi and actor Rekha are among the many celebrities who have frequented the store. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Our search for weavers to execute this dying technique led us to the man whose father had woven this particular sari," says Rohith, adding the son was a master weaver in his own right and helped them replicate the design.

Ties that bind

From their first store in Chickpet, Vijayalakshmi Silks today has seven branches with family members holding key positions. "We don't have purchase managers and procurement is all in the family," says Dhiren, Managing Partner at Vijayalakshmi Silks, adding, "We are structured as a family-run institute rather than a business."

Rohit says they uncovered reams of archival material that included letters, photos, cheques and more. "There are cheques by Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit written out in pice and annas. I am grateful our elders had the presence of mind to photograph these documents and save them for posterity."

Today, every Vijayalakshmi store has a history wall as, "we want to make visiting us an experience, and not just another shopping errand," he says.

Loom, Legacy & Landmark is at Sabha on April 24, from 11am to 9pm. Entry free.

State's new excise regime calibrates taxes to social cost of alcohol

The new regime that seeks to nudge people to lower strength beverages, will align alcoholic beverages to social cost that has been calculated to be ₹1,270 per litre of alcohol in beverage in 2024–2025 and is estimated to be ₹2,000 by 2028-2029

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

The social cost of alcohol consumption – ranging from health burden and domestic violence to accidents – is the fundamental reason behind Karnataka government's decision to move to Alcohol in Beverage (AIB) regime from the complicated slab-based excise duty structure based on price, notes the draft report on Karnataka Excise Reforms submitted by the K.P. Krishnan-headed Resource Mobilisation Committee.

Under the new regime, higher alcohol content liquor which was so far cheaper, would increase marginally this year, and become costlier over the next three to five years.

The new regime that seeks to nudge the consumers to lower strength beverages, will align alcoholic beverages to social cost that has been calculated to be around ₹1,270 per litre of alcohol in beverage in 2024-2025 and is estimated to be around ₹2,000 by 2028-2029. In 2026-2027, it has been estimated to be around ₹1,542.

A multi-State analysis has found that a 1% increase in tax reduces alcohol consumption by 0.14%, and actively nudges consumption toward lower-strength beverages – a behavioural shift that directly reduces harm, the report said.

It also noted with the raised excise duty, demand will contract as prices rise, while income growth will partially offset this through increased purchasing power. The government has proposed an increase that is in the range of 11% to 20%.

How economy works

- Alcohol taxation contributes to **1.4%** of State's Gross State Domestic Product; **11.1%** of total tax revenue; **20.3%** of own tax revenue (2024-2025)
- Contributes **0.4%** of employment in the State, employing about one lakh directly
- Around **11%** of the Karnataka's population consumes alcohol – below the national average at **14.6%**
- Karnataka is one of five Southern States that together account for roughly **45%** of all alcohol sold in the country
- Karnataka recorded approximately **6.88 crore** cases of IMFL sales, accounting for about **17%** of the total IMFL sales in India
- Approximately **98%** to **99%** of excise revenue arises from sales within Karnataka
- Karnataka is one of five Southern States that together account for roughly **45%** of all alcohol sold in the country

Social cost

- Alcohol consumption in Karnataka imposes social costs estimated at **2.0%** of GSDP (central estimate) — approximately **₹51,000 crore** annually
- Estimated social cost of alcohol consumption in Karnataka is **₹1,270 per litre** of alcohol in beverage in 2024-2025
- The excise on pure alcohol in the Indian Made Liquor – the highest strength, highest volume and highest harm segment market – is approximately **₹600 to ₹800 a litre**
- Per capita alcohol consumption in Karnataka is approximately **14 litres** of alcoholic beverages per year, corresponding to about **4.19 litres** of pure alcohol annually

Under the new regime, higher alcohol content liquor which was so far cheaper, would increase marginally this year, and become costlier over the next three to five years. SUDHAKARA JAIN

How costs work

After the proposed revision, the IMFL cost remains below neighbouring States in some segments. In entry-level segment, the revised MRP remains substantially lower while in the mid-level, price is broadly aligned or lower.

Currently, the economy Indian Made Liquor – the highest strength, highest-volume and highest harm segment of the market – bears an effective excise of approximately ₹600 to ₹800 per litre of pure alcohol, while the estimated social cost of that alcohol is approximately ₹1,542 per litre in 2026-27.

In contrast, the lower strength premium alcohol is being taxed at higher than the estimated social cost. The premium and imported spirits face excise burdens of ₹1,200 to ₹ 2,000 or more at or above the benchmark social cost.

"Karnataka's current excise framework taxes alcohol based on price and product category rather than on alcohol content. The system under taxes the products causing the most harm and over taxes those causing the least. Taxation should be calibrated to the social cost of alcohol consumption not to revenue targets, product categories or administrative convenience," recommended the draft report.

For Karnataka, where the market is dominated by spirits at 42.8%, ABV and strong beer at 6-8%, the potential for the shift to lower strength is substantial, the report said.

Drunk driving

Drunk driving causing harm to overwhelmingly innocent third parties – pedestrians, cyclists, passengers, and occupants of other vehicles, who had no part in the decision to drink; relationship of alcohol and domestic violence/sexual violence in India; alcohol linked to more than 200 diseases and injury conditions – liver cirrhosis, several cancers, cardiovascular diseases, and neuropsychiatric disorders among – are among the cited social costs.

It also pointed at the National Mental Health Survey (2016) that found an alcohol use disorder prevalence of 4.6% nationally and Karnataka falls within the 2.5%-4.9 % prevalence band. It has referred to particularly concerning dimension of adolescent initiation and alcohol expenditure as a share of total household spending.

Karnataka's unique issue with alcohol

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka has a unique issue with consumption of alcohol. Fewer people drink, but those who do, drink more. Consumption remains concentrated in lower-priced product segments, creating a market structure driven largely by volume rather than value.

The pattern of high-intensity consumption among a smaller base of drinkers generates the most harm with the risk of accidents, violence, liver disease, and dependence rising steeply with the quantity consumed per occasion, the K.P. Krishnan-headed Resource Mobilisation Committee reported. The lower-priced Indian Made Liquor (IML) accounts for the dominant share of sales – high in alcohol content, sold at low price points – and therefore delivering more pure alcohol per rupee than beer or wine.

About 11% of the Karnataka's population consumes alcohol – below the national average at 14.6%. According to NFHS-5 data, approximately 16.5% of men aged 15-49 in Karnataka reported consuming alcohol, compared with around 0.9% of women.

The proportion of individuals aged 15 and above who consume alcohol in Karnataka is approximately 8.62%, which is lower than the national average of around 10%.

Karnataka recorded approximately 6.88 crore cases of IMFL sales, accounting for about 17% of total IMFL sales in India, and is one of five Southern states that together account for roughly 45% of all alcohol sold in the country.

Per-capita alcohol consumption in the State is significantly higher, estimated at approximately 9.1 litres per person per year, compared with the national average of 6.4 litres.

In other words, the State exhibits a pattern of intensity-driven consumption rather than prevalence-driven consumption, report pointed out, adding that these features have important implications for both the social costs associated with alcohol use and the design of effective taxation and regulatory policies.

Online sales to be allowed?

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The committee has asked the government to consider regulated online sale and home delivery of liquor as a "controlled extension of licensed retail system" even as it warned of genuine risks, particularly in relation to underage access, excessive convenience, and the possibility of unlicensed intermediaries. On the positive side, the committee said that it can function as a more transparent, traceable, and administratively manageable extension of the existing excise framework.

BJP protests against Kharge's remarks

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka BJP on Thursday staged a protest in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the premises of the Vidhana Soudha, condemning AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge's "terrorist" remark against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and demanded that he apologise to the country.

The protest was led by State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra, Leaders of Opposition in the Assembly and the Council R. Ashok and Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje, and several party legislators and leaders. Holding placards, they shouted slogans against Mr. Kharge.

The BJP is planning yet another protest on April 25 in all the district centres in the State to protest against the alleged anti-women stand of the Congress.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client **Sri. L. Manjunath S/o. M. Lakshmana, aged about 48 years,** R/at No.179, Manjunatha Traders, Chikka Banaswadi Main Road, Near Govt School, Maruthisevanagar, Bangalore-560033 intend to purchase the below mentioned immovable property and agreed to enter into an agreement of sale with Sri. Krishnamurthy S/o. late Sanjeevamurthy, aged about 91years, R/at Thathnuru Village, Anugondanahalli Hobli, Hoskote Taluk, Bengaluru-560067 along with his family members, they represent and declare that they are the absolute owners of the said property

Any person/s having any manner of right, title or interest in or over the schedule property are hereby call upon to lodge their such claim/objections with the undersigned and writing with supporting documents within 15 days from the date of this publication. If no such objections are not received within the said period, my client will proceed to purchase the schedule property and claims received after the said period will not be considered

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the Agricultural property bearing oldest Sy.No.26/9. Old Sy. No. 50 and affecting of Hissa Phodi assigned as New Sy.No.50/1,(60 feet x 197 feet) measuring 10 guntas out of total extent of 1 acre 05 guntas, situated at Deshapande Ghattahalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District and bounded on:-

East by : Property of Channaraju. **West by :** Main Road. **North by:** Remaining Property belongs to VENDORS in same Sy.No. **South by:** Property of Channaraju.

Sd/- M. Ramachandra, Advocate
No.39/1, 1st Floor, Chamber No.18,
ASVNV Centenary Bhavan,
Dated: 22.04.2026 K.G. Road, Bangalore-09
Bangalore. Mob:9845826988

HC stays special court's order over registering FIR against Parameshwara

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Thursday stayed the order of a special court, which had on April 21 directed the Tumakuru police to register an FIR against Karnataka Home Minister G. Parameshwara and Tumakuru Deputy Commissioner Subha Kalyan over alleged illegal betting during a public kabbadi tournament in October 2025.

Justice S. Sunil Dutt Yadav passed the interim order on a petition filed by Dr. Parameshwara, who had questioned the legality of the order passed by the special court of magistrate for criminal cases against former and current MPs and MLAs.

The special court had acted on a private complaint by H.R. Nagabushan.

The complainant alleged that Dr. Parameshwara and Ms. Kalyan bet ₹500 on the Dakshina Kannada district kabbadi team during a match in Tumakuru on October 19, 2025. The complaint was lodged based on the media statements of Dr. Parameshwara and the Deputy Commissioner on betting while claiming that it amounts to instigation to public participation in illegal betting. Sections 112(2) (petty organised crime) and 45 (abetment) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita were invoked in the complaint.

The complainant had approached Kodigehalli police station in Koratagere taluk, but the sub-inspector closed the complaint on October 29, 2025, calling it baseless.

The special court had found the closure report lacked proper investigation, noting that the police did not consider newspaper reports or summon evidence. Citing Kannada dailies from October 20-21, 2025, the court found a *prima facie* case.

Also, the special court ruled that no prior government sanction was needed for registering FIR, as the alleged betting fell outside the officials' duties.

CM urged to act against liquor shops violating norms

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP MLA for Rajajinagar S. Suresh Kumar has written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, appealing to him to take strict measures to ensure that liquor shops do not violate the norms related to working hours.

Open letter

In an open letter, Mr. Suresh Kumar said liquor shops erring on timings, located particularly in residential areas, were causing nuisance to women and children.

Mr. Suresh Kumar, who has started "walk in a ward every day" initiative, during which he visits different places in his constituency, said the striking feedback from his programme was the ill-effects of liquor on families.

He said though the liquor shops were not supposed to open before 10 a.m. and also required to shut operations at a particular time in the night, they were not adhering to the norms.

Some of the liquor shops were opening as early as 5 a.m. to attract customers who were addicted to liquor, he said. He expressed concern over the pressure from the government to increase the excise revenues through increased liquor sales. "The government which boasts of providing ₹ 2,000 per month to women through Gruha Laksmi scheme and free travel to women through Shakti scheme, is also indulging in a sinful act of snatching the money by making their menfolk addicted to liquor," he remarked.

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, 1st Floor,
BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052.

No: DGM-1/BSWML/PR/150/2026-27 Date: 23.04.2026

TENDER CANCELLATION NOTIFICATION (Only through GOK KPP Portal Only)

This is to inform the general public and all concerned that below mentioned tender notifications issued by **Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML** on **10.03.2026** has been cancelled due to technical reasons.

1. Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/26/2025-26
2. Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/27/2025-26

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML

DIPR/CP/AAA/339/2026-27

ಆದಿಕವಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹರ್ಷಿ ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ ರಾಯಚೂರು
Adikavi Shri Maharshi Valmiki University, Raichur
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ಯರಗೇರಾ – 584 133, ರಾಯಚೂರು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

No: ASMVUR/ADM/47TENDER/2026-27/Advert/58 Date:17.04.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
Through E-Procurement System only)

Short term tender is invited from the reputed Companies/ Agenciesto"Provide Manpower Service's - 47 (Lab Assistant-10/ Computer Operator-12/ Peon-25) to Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki University, Raichur, Yeragera - 584133." Last date for submission of online tender is Date: 15.05.2026, 05-PM. Tender form fees and EMD are as per e-portal only. For more details, download the information from the website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/RU/2026-27/SE0013,

Note : If any changes in the tender it will be published in e-tender portal only

Sd/- Registrar
Adikavi Shri Maharshi Valmiki University, Raichur

DIP/RCR/39/KSMC&A/41/2026-27

e-Swathu services now available at Grama One, Karnataka One, and Bengaluru One Centres

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The RDPR Department has signed an agreement to expand access to e-Swathu services. FILE PHOTO

Now, services related to e-Swathu will be available at Bapooji Seva Kendra (Grama One), Karnataka One, and Bengaluru One integrated service centres across the State as the RDPR Department has entered into an agreement with authorities concerned to expand the access to e-Swathu services as part of measures to bring government services closer to citizens.

The RDPR Department, in collaboration with the e-Governance Department's Directorate of Electronic Delivery of Citizen Services (EDCS), has signed an agreement to expand access to e-Swathu services.

For three years

According to an official release, the agreement will be valid for a period of three years.

Under this initiative, key services related to the e-Swathu system developed by the RDPR Department – mainly application submission, will now be available at these centres State-wide.

To ensure smooth implementation of the initiative, operators at these centres will receive necessary training on the e-Swathu system from the RDPR Department. Dedicated login credentials will also be created for operators. Additionally, nodal officers will be appointed by the RDPR Department to coordinate and oversee the delivery of these services, the release states.

A fee of ₹45 will have to be paid for availing new khata services, which will be borne by the citizens. For scanning and uploading documents required for e-Swathu applications, ₹5 per page will be charged, the release notes.

All Grama One, Karnataka One, and Bengaluru One centres will operate from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. throughout the year. The centres will remain closed on all national holidays.

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Division Ballari
Email: ee_pwdbellary@yahoo.com Telephone No: 08392 -266123

No: EE/PWD/BD/TS-1/2026-27/378 Dated :22-04-2026.

Short term Tender Notification (Two Cover Sysytem)

The Executive Engineer, Public works Department Division, Ballari invites the tenders for the works detailed in the table from the eligible contractors registered in Karnataka Public Works Department, through KPP- portal. Two cover tender procedure as per KTPP Act shall be followed. The tender documents can be downloaded through the web-site https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ For any additional information the tenderers may contact the office of the undersigned during office working hours.**TABLE**

Sl No	Details of Works	Amount of Estimate (Rs. in Lakhs)
1)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35801	200.00
2)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35804	300.00
3)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35803	500.00
4)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35802	500.00
5)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35800	500.00
6)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35799	500.00
7)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35778	200.00

Note : Any changes either in tender dates or any other conditions, tenderers can view in KPP_Procurement Portal.
1)Last dates for queries (through KPP –portal): **27-04-2026 upto 12.00 Hours**
2)Last date for submission of tenders through KPP -portal: **30-04-2026 upto 16.00 Hours**
3)Date and time of opening of Technical Bids: **02-05-2026 at 11.30 Hours in the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Ballari.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Ballari.

DIPR/Ballari/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/78

Convention to mark 50 years of public life of BSY to be held on May 9

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

B.S. Yediyurappa

A mega convention in being planned in Chitradurga on May 9 to mark 50 years of public life of BJP leader and former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa.

Announcing this at a press conference here on Thursday, honorary president of the proposed convention and former Deputy Chief Minister Govind Karjol said the convention had been titled "BSY Abhimanotsava".

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will participate in the convention and felicitate Mr. Yediyurappa, he said, adding that it was expected to be attended by over 10 lakh persons from different parts of the State.

He said the groundbreaking ceremony for the convention would be held on April 26 to mark the commencement of works related to erecting pandals and setting up temporary infrastructure facilities.

Mr. Karjol indicated that the convention would be apolitical, as Mr. Yediyurappa's contemporaries and friends, cutting across political affiliations, would be participating in it.

He said Chitradurga had been chosen as the venue as it was in the central part of Karnataka that would make it convenient for people of both northern and southern parts to reach.

Answering a query, Mr. Karjol maintained that the BSY Abhimanotsava should not be compared to Siddaramotsava that had been held earlier to mark the 75th birthday of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

"Mr. Yediyurappa is a leader who is synonymous with public campaigns and struggles unlike Mr. Siddaramaiah," he argued.

The logo for the convention was released in the presence of BJP State president and Mr. Yediyurappa's son B.Y. Vijayendra.

Sabarimala: Pandalam family member slams Kerala's stand

Senior representative of erstwhile royal family criticises govt. in Supreme Court for not being firm in opposing petitions filed by non-believers questioning the age-old rituals of Sabarimala temple

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Pandalam family is traditionally considered the foster family of Lord Ayyappa, the deity in Sabarimala. LEJU KAMAL

A senior representative of the erstwhile royal family of Pandalam, which is traditionally and by legend, the foster family of Lord Ayyappa, the Sabarimala deity, criticised the State of Kerala in the Supreme Court on Thursday for not taking a firm stand against petitions filed by non-believers questioning the age-old rituals and beliefs of the temple.

Appearing before a nine-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, senior advocate K. Radhakrishnan, appearing for the family representative, recalled that the State had not budged years ago in the face of a demand to initiate an enquiry into the *Makaravilakku*.

However, Mr. Radhakrishnan said that in the case concerning the prohibition of entry to women of menstruating years into the temple, the State was found to have left it to the expertise of modern religious scholars. "How can scholars of the modern era fathom the puja *vidhis* (rituals) crafted by Lord Parashurama in the Sabarimala temple and Adi Shankaracharya at the Guruvayur Temple," Mr. Radhakrishnan asked. He said the courts and the State must be slow in taking on ecclesiastical matters.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for petitioners across religious lines, said "state incursions cannot result in excessive government entanglement" in religious matters.

Pooram scaled down after Thrissur blast

The Hindu Bureau
THRISSUR

In the wake of the fireworks tragedy at Mundathikode in Thrissur that killed at least 15, authorities decided on Thursday to conduct this year's Thrissur Pooram without fireworks, while significantly scaling down the *Kudamattam* (parasol exchange), one of its most iconic elements.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting held at the district Collectorate, attended by State Ministers, Union Minister Suresh Gopi, MPs, elected representatives, and Devaswom officials.

The festival will be conducted largely in a ritualistic format, with reduced visual extravagance.

Devaswoms also informed the meeting that all preparations for the festival had already been completed, making any last-minute withdrawal impractical.

Although the Paramekkavu Devaswom had earlier sought permission to conduct fireworks, government representatives said legal and technical constraints made it impossible under the present circumstances.

Officials emphasised that the decisions reflect a balance between preserving tradition and responding responsibly to the recent tragedy, noting that the victims of the blast remain central to all considerations.

Kudamattam

While all major rituals will be retained, the famed *Kudamattam* will be curtailed to just 15 minutes, with just 10 sets of umbrellas to be displayed.

Core ceremonies such as *Ilanjithara Melam* and *Madathil Varavu* will proceed as scheduled, and 15 elephants each will be lined up for the processions.

Both the main fireworks display at night – held at the culmination of the festival – and the daytime fireworks have been completely dropped.

Instead, a symbolic bursting of *Kathina* will be carried out.

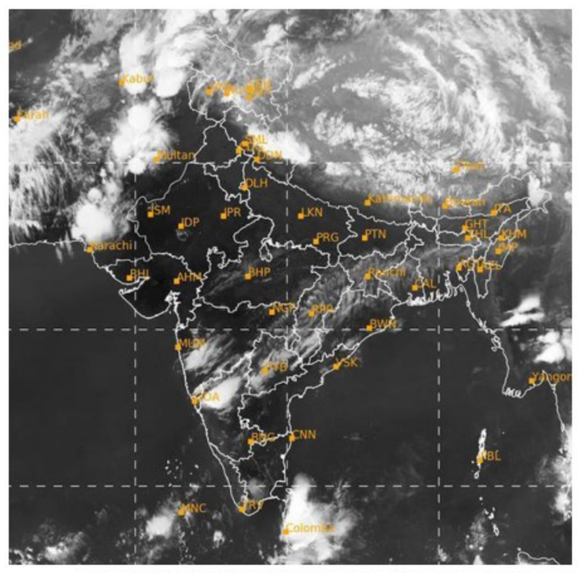
The government had initially proposed cancelling both *Kudamattam* and fireworks.

However, Devaswom authorities insisted that *Kudamattam*, a central ritual, could not be omitted.

The meeting ultimately accepted this position while agreeing to scale it down.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	36.4	25.2	Kozhikode	—	37.6	28.3
Ahmedabad	—	41.5	25.6	Kurnool	—	43.1	28.5
Aizawl	—	32.6	18.8	Lucknow	—	42.2	25.3
Allahabad	—	44.4	23.6	Madurai	—	40.0	26.5
Bengaluru	—	36.4	22.9	Mangaluru	—	33.8	26.0
Bhopal	—	41.0	22.6	Mumbai	—	35.9	24.4
Bhubaneswar	—	42.1	26.4	Mysuru	—	37.2	23.0
Chandigarh	—	40.0	20.9	New Delhi	—	41.7	25.4
Chennai	—	37.5	27.2	Patna	—	41.3	27.4
Coimbatore	—	38.5	25.0	Port Blair	—	33.3	26.6
Dehradun	—	37.5	20.2	Puducherry	—	35.0	26.5
Gangtok	—	24.1	14.2	Pune	—	41.0	26.0
Goa	—	35.3	26.5	Raipur	—	42.8	27.0
Guwahati	—	32.2	21.5	Ranchi	—	38.9	23.0
Hubballi	—	37.0	24.0	Shillong	—	24.8	13.0
Hyderabad	—	39.7	28.5	Shimla	—	30.2	19.5
Imphal	—	29.5	17.5	Srinagar	—	27.8	12.2
Jaipur	—	39.6	26.4	Thiruvananthapuram	—	35.5	26.7
Kochi	—	33.4	28.2	Tiruchi	—	38.5	26.6
Kohima	—	27.0	16.0	Vijayawada	—	39.5	26.4
Kolkata	—	38.7	27.6	Visakhapatnam	—	31.7	28.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO₂	NO₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.48	147	10	48	111	
Bengaluru	9	12	32	144	155	
Chennai	.15	6	47	17	29	
Delhi	.37	109	44	165	269	
Hyderabad	.16	.16	38	63	88	
Kolkata	.8	.36	39	60	65	
Lucknow	.10	.56	46	250	134	
Mumbai	.3	.21	37	60	155	
Pune	.37	.58	61	58	87	
Visakhapatnam	.28	.64	25	27	99	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Angul, Odisha recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 286 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 23

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, SRI. SHASHANK TSAPPATI, Aged about 35 years, Son of Sri. T.N.V.V. Rao, Residing at Villa No. 69, Skanda Avani Layout, Behind Govt. School, Off Sarjapur Road, Hadosiddapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka – 560 035, who is the absolute owner of property described in Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated, decided to purchase the Property situated at situated at Hadosiddapura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, from the above said respective owners. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of Inheritance, Mortgage, Sale, Conveyance, MOU, Joint Development Agreement, General Power of Attorney, Agreement to Sell, Transfer, Lease Deed, Tenancy, License, Lien, Charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office at No. 276, Ground Floor, 12th Main, 5th Cross, Sector -5, HSR Layout, Bangalore - 560 102, **within 15 days from the date of publication hereof,** failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Residential Site bearing **No. 367, carved out of residentially converted Survey Number 11, situated at Hadosiddapura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, bearing Panchayath Khatha No. 888.11.367, Property ID No. 150200402300321265, in the layout known as "SKANDA AVANI", measuring East to West 28.9 Feet, and North to South 20 Feet, totally measuring 53.74 Sq. Mtrs., or 578 Sq. Feet., along with a Residential Building consisting of Stilt, Ground, First and Second Floors, with a total built up area of 147.24 Sq. Mtrs.** and bounded on the:

East by : Sy. No. 12, **West by :** Road,
North by : Site No. 366, **South by :** Site No. 368.

Dated this 24th day of April, 2026, at Bangalore,
RASHMI D., ADVOCATE,
No. 276, Ground Floor, 12th Main, 5th Cross, Sector -5, HSR Layout, Bangalore - 560 102.
Phone: +91-9480492319.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Under the instructions of my client Sri. C.H. Rajeshwara S/o Late T. R. Chandrashekara Shetty, Residing at Taluk office Road, Turuvekere Town, Turuvekere, Tumakuru District. I issue this public notice for lost of Register sale deed dated: 24-06-2000 volume No. I-767-2000-2001.

Registered Sale Deed dated: 24-06-2000The Public notice issued by Sri. C.H. Rajeshwara S/o Late T. R. Chandrashekara Shetty, Residing at Taluk office Road, Turuvekere Town, Turuvekere, Tumakuru District. I am permanently residing at above address, I purchased the Mangaluru tiled house and vacant site situated at Taluk office Road, Turuvekere Town, Tumakuru District, bearing SL. No. 1690-Assessment No. 1394/772, East-West: 35 Feet, North-South: 13 Feet property purchased by me under a Registered sale deed dated: 24-06-2000 volume No. I-767-2000-2001 from my vendors by name T.V. Govinda Shetty S/o Late T. N. Venkatarama Shetty and others since from date of purchase I am lawful possession enjoyment of the said property the above original Registered sale deed dated: 24-06-2000 volume No. I-767-2000-2001 have been lost while travelling in government bus from Turuvekere to Banasandra on 20-03-2026 at about 02:16 PM, therefore I request all public if the above Registered sale deed dated: 24-06-2000 volume No. I-767-2000-2001 is found please neither contact T.T. Udayashankar B.A.L.L.B, Advocate & Notary, B.T. Road, Turuvekere – 572227, Mob: 9448449141 nor Sri. C.H. Rajeshwara S/o Late T. R. Chandrashekara Shetty, Residing at "Sri Swarnambha Nilaya", Taluk office, Turuvekere Town, Turuvekere, Tumakuru District. Mobile No: 9480747207 handed-over to us in the above address or any objection is to be filed **within 7 days** from the date of above public notice otherwise it is treated as objection not filed.

T. T. UDAYASHANKAR, B.A.L.L.B
Advocate & Notary, Roll No: 266/85
B.T. Road, Turuvekere - 572227
Mob: 9448449141

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public and all concerned authorities that **Mr. Harish Kumar Thakur,** presently associated with M/s Pureflow Biofloc Innovations, has unauthorizedly used the letterhead, seal, and purported signature of M/s Aqua World, Mysore, and has falsely represented that an Experience Certificate was issued to him by Mr. Vinod Kumar, Director of M/s Aqua World, Mysore. in this connection M/s Aqua World management has lodged complaint to the Nazarbad Police Station Mysuru, based on the complaint Nazarbad Police registered the case in Crime No.33/2026 under section 318(2), 336(2), 336(3), 340(2) of BNS. Thereafter **Thakur** reportedly absconded. After remaining absconding for several days, Mysuru Police traced and arrested **Thakur** in Chandigarh. He has now been brought back to Mysuru for further legal proceedings.

It is hereby categorically stated and clarified that:

1. M/s Aqua World, Mysore has not issued any experience certificate, recommendation letter, authorization letter, or any similar document to **Mr. Harish Kumar Thakur** at any time.
2. Any document, certificate, communication, or representation purportedly issued on the letterhead of M/s Aqua World, Mysore, bearing the name, seal, or signature of Mr. Vinod Kumar Sabharwal, in favor of **Mr. Harish Kumar Thakur** or M/s Pureflow Biofloc Innovations, is false, fabricated, forged, and unauthorized, and the same shall be treated as null and void ab initio (invalid from the beginning).
3. M/s Aqua World, Mysore, its Directors, officers, and representatives shall not be responsible or liable for any loss, damage, misrepresentation, contractual obligation, or legal consequence arising from the use, reliance, or circulation of any such forged or unauthorized documents.
4. Any person, organization, institution, government authority, or entity dealing with **Mr. Harish Kumar Thakur** or M/s Pureflow Biofloc Innovations on the basis of such documents is hereby cautioned to verify the authenticity directly with M/s Aqua World, Mysore before relying upon the same.
5. Appropriate legal and criminal proceedings, including action under applicable provisions of the Indian Penal Code, such as forgery, cheating, and criminal misrepresentation, are being initiated against the concerned individuals.

This notice is being issued in the interest of public awareness and to prevent misuse of the name, reputation, letterhead, seal, and identity of M/s Aqua World, Mysore.

Date: 20-04-2026
Place: Mysore, Karnataka

For and on behalf of
M/s Aqua World, Mysore

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
DEPARTMENT OF MINES & GEOLOGY
Office of the Senior Geologist, Uttara Kannada, Karwar - 581306. Phone: 08382-227395

No. DMG/UKD/e-Auction/Boulders/2026-27 Date: 24.05.2026

e-AUCTION PUBLICATION

Invites the e-applications for auction of boulders generated at National Highway NH-66 construction from Uttara Kannada district, Karwar Taluk Binaga to Ankola Taluk Baleguli area. Interested persons / companies / firm / agencies can apply through e-procurement. Auction No.: DMG/2026-27/AUCTION61 e-Auction documents and annexure can download from the e-portal website: **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. Last date for uploading the Annexure and submission of e-application is 08.05.2026. Live bidding is scheduled on 14.05.2026. Applications and Bids shall be submitted through e-procurement platform only.

Sd/-, Senior Geologist / e-Auction Inviting Authority
Department of Mines & Geology, Karwar

Government Of Karnataka
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, SOTHERN RANGE MYSURU
Hyder Ali Road, Kittur Rani Chennamma Circle, Jalapuri, Mysuru-570019
Phone: 0821-2421200, 2418604, Email: aaosrmys@gmail.com/igpsrmys@ksp.gov.in

Tender Notification (Call-2) (Through e-procurement)

The Inspector General of Police, Southern Range, Mysuru has invited Online tender (Call-2) for the purchase of **Drones** under the Police Modernization scheme **2025-26.** The Details are Follows:

Sl No	Tender Number and Date	Approx. Tender value in Rs Crore
01	KSP/2025-26/IND0501/CALL-2 Date:21.04.2026	01.00

Date and other related information can be obtained at e-procurement portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in for more information, please contact the above office.

Sd/-
Inspector General of Police, Sothern Range, Mysuru

DIPR/MYSURU/83/Shirdi Sai/2026-27

Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Ramanagara Division
Ramangara Division, Bengaluru South District

No. EE/PWD/RMN Div./TND-01/2026-27 Date : 22.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender invited from qualified contractors for the works through KPP portal as per standard bid document. The eligible contractors can participate in this tender through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Documents may be downloaded from: **23.04.2026** & Last date for submission of tenders **Dt: 07.05.2026 up to 16.00 hours**. Date of opening of Tender **Dt: 08.05.2026 at 16.30 hours** (if possible). Tender processing fees & EMD as per KPP Portal. No of **works 01,** Estimate Cost **Rs. 72.00 lakhs.** For more information contact the above office during office hours.

Note: Here after any changes with reference to this Notification will be Notified in KPP-Portal Only.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
PWD Ramanagar Division, Bengaluru South District

DIPR/BSD/30/SA/2026-27

Office of The Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Department,
Chickballapur Division, Chickballapur. Phone: 08156-270058, E-mail ID: eerdwsd.ckb2@gmail.com
No. EE/RWS&D/CBP/TS/TENDER/2026-27/
DATE: 18.04.2026

Tender Notification No. 01/2026-27 Dated: 18.04.2026 & 01/2023-24, 05/2023-24 ,28/2023-24, 01 & 25/ 2024-25, 07/2024-25, 04/ 2025-26, 10/2025-26, 14/2025-26, Call- 2,3,5,6,8

Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Division, Chickballapur, On behalf of Governor of Karnataka Invites request for proposal of tenders from the eligible bidders for the work of Providing FHTC"S to 11Villages in Gowribidanur-7, Gudibande-3 & Bagepalli Taluk-1 in Chickballapur District . Two Cover tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTPP act shall be followed. The tenderers are required to submit (Under KW-I KW-II, KW-III,) tenders through KPPP portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ (1)** Last Date & Time for Queries: **30.04.2026 Time : 5.30 PM. (2)** Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: **02.05.2026 Time : 5.30PM. (3)** Date & Time of Technical Bid Opening: **04.05.2026 Time : 11.00 AM. (4)** Date & Time of Financial Bid Opening: **06.05.2026 Time : 11.00 AM.** More details can be had from the office of the undersigned and also through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/** by clicking List of Tenders which will link to all Dept. works list.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department, Chickballapur

DIPR/CHIKKABALLAPUR/RO:36/KSMCA/2026-27

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.:CGM(Tech)/DGM(APCC & Proc)/EEP/AEE2/AE2/2026-27/444-457 Date:23.04.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

KPTCL invites Bids on electronic mode against the following Tender Enquiry No. as detailed below:

Sl.No.	Tender Enquiry Number and Description
1	**Tender Enquiry No: KPTCL/2026-27/IND0298** Tender for Design, Manufacture, Testing and supply of **180 Kms of 11kV UG Cables of various sizes viz, 1CX1000sqmm, 3CX400Sqmm, 3CX240Sqmm & 3CX95sqmm** required for all Operation (Transmission) Zones of KPTCL conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at Store/Site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading. **Availability of Bid documents in KPP Portal: On or after 28.04.2026 @15:00Hrs** **Last date & time for receipt of Bids: 29.05.2026 @15:00Hrs**

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** **Any extension of Due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal.** Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

Sd/- Chief General Manager(Tech),
KPTCL, Corporate Office, 11th Floor, Indhana Bhavan, Bengaluru-560009.

MAHATRANSCO
Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)
(LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)

SRM e-Tender No. T-2615/MSETCL/CO/Projects/Pre-Tender (RFx No. 6000001493) (1st Call)

MSETCL invites offers by SRM e-tendering in TWO bid system (Techno-Commercial Bid and Price Bid) from the eligible registered bidders for the following work as detailed below.

"Creation of 400/220 kV Switchyard at M/s GWEL for evacuation arrangement for MSEDCL share of 200 MW power from 2x300 MW Thermal Power Plant Dist. Chandrapur under Nagpur zone, MSETCL, Maharashtra."

Interested bidders may obtain further information available on the website **https://srmetender.mahatransco.in**

The date of downloading of Bid documents available on the website is from 21.04.2026.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Projects), MSETCL

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Pulikeshinagara Division, Robertson Road, Bengaluru.
No: EE/(PN)/TEND/PR/01/2026-27 **Date: 23-04-2026**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(SINGLE COVER SYSTEM)

(Through **GOK** KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** only)

Tenders on item rate basis are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Commissioner, BNCC for the works mentioned below from the registered contractors of equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations. **(Standard Tender Document KW-2)**

Sl No.	Name of the Work
	General Category Works
1.	Annual Maintenance of Ward and Desilting of Drains in Ward no.72, D.J. Halli for the year 2025-26 (Deposit Contribution to Roshannagar Multistoried Individual Houses) (2nd Call) **Est Cost: ₹.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.60000.00**
2.	Filling up of Pot Holes in Ward No. 71 Muneshwara Nagara for the year 2025-26 (2nd Call) **Est Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.50000.00**
3.	Filling up of Pot Holes in Ward No. 73 S K Garden for the year 2025-26 (2nd Call) **Est Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.50000.00**
	SC Category Works
1.	Annual Maintenance of Ward and Desilting of Drains in Ward no.73, S K Garden for the year 2025-26 (Deposit Contribution to Roshannagar Multistoried Individual Houses) (2nd Call) **Est Cost: ₹.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.30000.00**
2.	Improvements to Drains & Construction from Hindu Burial Ground Entrance to Ashrama Layout Entrance in Ward No.71(48) Muneshwaranagar for the year 2025-26 (3rd Call) **Est Cost: ₹.40.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.40000.00**
3.	Improvements to Road & Drain in Anwar layout 1st Main and Surrounding in Ward No. 31(70) Kushalanagar for the year 2025-26 (3rd Call) **Est Cost: ₹.40.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.40000.00**

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP portal from **27-04-2026** (2) Pre-bid meeting will be held on **30-04-2026** at **3:00** pm (3) Last Date & Time for Receipts of tenders on **08-05-2026** upto **4:00** pm. (4) Date of Opening of Financial Bid on **10-05-2026** after **11:30** am

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Pulikeshinagar Division

Cycle of violence

Manipur sees little respite despite a change of guard under the BJP

Ethnic quagmires are among the most difficult situations for governments to untangle, given the violence and persistence of hostilities – even for those committed to restoring peace. The reason is the intransigent nature of ethnic divides, where hostile elements resist any efforts at normalisation. Any space for empathy is restricted as every incident is ethnicised. The situation is compounded when the government of the day fails to nip the descent into ethnicised hostilities in the bud, making it even more difficult for civil society and subsequent governments to restore peace and normalcy. This is the kind of situation that Manipur finds itself in. Even a relatively moderate Chief Minister such as Yumnam Khemchand Singh, who has sought – at least through nominal gestures – to rise above the ethnic fray, has found the going tough. Violence has flared up again following a bombing attack on April 7 that killed a five-year-old boy and an infant girl in Bishnupur district. Reports of the alleged involvement of a Kuki extremist organisation in bombing attacks - denied by Kuki groups - triggered a series of protests in the valley and renewed violence led to more deaths. With disinformation and rumour-mongering adding fuel to the fire, Manipur has returned to a cycle of violence and hardening stances among groups in its persistent ethnic quagmire.

The Bharatiya Janata Party initially believed that the resignation of former Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, efforts to curb violent ethnic organisations, and the passage of time would help restore normalcy. After a spell of President's Rule, and in an apparent effort to promote a more moderate form of governance before elections are due, the BJP formed a new government under Mr. Khemchand Singh. However, the inadequate involvement of political leaders – including from the Union government – in a genuine peacebuilding exercise shows that the situation has not improved despite these nominal changes by the BJP. A more thoroughgoing carrot and stick approach, empowering civil society leaders willing to advance peace and punishing those promoting and engaging in violence, would have certainly helped. But political variables focused more on retaining power than achieving peace appear to have kept those seeking to advance hardline views in positions of influence on both sides of the divide. A more pro-active role by the Home Ministry and a genuine effort by the BJP to involve all political actors in easing tensions should help. This should be supplemented by a strategy that empowers security agencies to crack down on hardline elements engaging in wanton violence such as bombings. Short of these measures, Manipur will continue to convulse with recurring incidents of violence, reactions and reprisals.

High heat

India must address the underlying vulnerability to hot weather

India's summers are known to be hot, but this year the high heat has arrived noticeably early. The India Meteorological Department has sounded heat alerts in central and south India, including in Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana and Kerala. Parts of Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat have also scaled the 40°C mark, with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka not far behind. Local conditions in coastal areas, in particular, could be worse due to humidity and the urban heat island effect. Warmer nights also delay physiological recovery, increasing the local health-care burden. Such temperatures are usually encountered in May-June but have become apparent in April. While pre-monsoon heatwaves are common in India, they are becoming larger and more intense. This year, a lack of western disturbances and thunderstorms, along with lower convective activity, has also done away with natural cooling, with residual effects of the previous El Niño adding to the heat. Persistently high heat is linked to a significantly higher risk of death from cardiovascular causes. Some 247 billion work-hours were lost in 2024 to heat, according to *The Lancet* Countdown Global Report, with workers in construction and agriculture the most affected. Heat stress is an ongoing concern for farmers during the *rabi* harvest. Hot weather accelerates crop maturity, threatening food security and feeding inflationary pressure.

Experts have complained that most heat action plans (HAPs) – India's primary institutional response to heat – focus on emergency response and lack funds for structural interventions such as urban re-greening and mandatory heat-safety legislation for workers in the informal sector. They have thus failed to address underlying vulnerabilities. On April 23, in the Tamil Nadu and West Bengal polls, and Gujarat and Maharashtra by-elections, lakhs of electors had to brave the heat. Concerns about voter turnout in the heat prompted the Election Commission of India to keep polling booths open longer during the 2024 general election; such reactive measures alone will not suffice this year. If warming continues along current trajectories, more than a few parts of India will begin approaching human survivability limits. HAPs desperately need sufficient, long-term funding while public systems must roll out mobile health units and doorstep delivery of essential services during peak heat to reduce the income penalties that deter access. Colombia has convened a coalition of roughly 50 countries to explore a faster transition away from fossil fuels in a parallel 'climate conference'. India should join it, not least because of the greater access to climate adaptation finance it could afford.

Lebanon yearns for peace and deliverance

Mahesh Sachdev

Retired Indian Ambassador with an interest in West Asia and oil matters

The high-octane din of the ongoing Operation Epic Fury against Iran, which began on February 28, 2026, has largely subsumed an equally ferocious war being waged simultaneously in Lebanon. While this fracas between the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Lebanon's Hezbollah militia has some linkages to the Iranian imbroglio, it would be simplistic to regard it as a mere sideshow of the latter. The Lebanon conflict predates the formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979 and has its own background, drivers and ramifications.

A battleground

Indeed, for much of its 83 years as an independent nation, Lebanon, with a current population of five million, has been used as a springboard for foreign causes against Israel, with which it shares a 79-km land border. Following the creation of Israel in 1948, nearly 1,00,000 Palestinians took refuge in Lebanon. They eventually led to the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), based in Beirut, forming a state within the Lebanese state. The PLO, under its Chairman Yasser Arafat, conducted guerrilla activities against Israel, provoking Israeli wrath against Lebanon. A civil war broke out in Lebanon in 1975, pushing ethnic identities over nationalism. The PLO joined the conflict. In 1982 the IDF invaded Lebanon to expel it, causing the PLO to relocate to Tunis. However, most Palestinian residents remained in Lebanon and are now estimated at around 5,00,000, roughly one-tenth of the population. Syria, a neighbouring big brother under the al-Assad regime, also intervened in the civil war, maintaining a so-called "deterrent force" ostensibly to maintain order.

Lebanon's relief at the PLO's exit was short-lived. Revolutionary Iran soon waded in to seed the Hezbollah militia to collectivise and militarise the country's sizable, but poorer, Shia population in the southern areas bordering Israel. Over the next few decades, Iran invested billions of dollars into bankrolling Hezbollah, transforming it into Lebanon's most powerful militia, a Shia welfare organisation, and a key pillar of Iran's "Axis of Resistance". Through guerrilla tactics, Hezbollah fighters inflicted steady losses on the IDF, evicting it from the buffer zone in southern Lebanon in 2000. Subsequently, in 2006, Hezbollah fought off the IDF in a month-long conflict. This "success" prompted the militia's conversion into a regular proto-army with a fortified Israeli border with sizeable missile and drone capabilities.

Following the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, Hezbollah joined the battle against the IDF. In the autumn of 2024, Israel leveraged its deep intelligence penetration to devastating effect: decapitating Hezbollah hierarchy, including its long-time leader, Syed Hassan Nasrallah, and several regional commanders. In a dramatic manner, Israel simultaneously exploded a large number of pagers and walkie-talkies to kill, maim, and demoralise hundreds of Hezbollah fighters. Hezbollah kept a steady barrage of missile and drone attacks, forcing many Israeli citizens to relocate from northern Israel. However, by the time of the ceasefire in late October 2024, Hezbollah had been reduced to a pale shadow of its former self. The fall of the al-Assad regime in Syria, which acted as a land bridge with Iran, was a serious setback. Although Hezbollah conspicuously stayed out of Iran's 12-day war with Israel and the United States in June 2025, the degradation of Iranian defence capabilities impacted it. Within Lebanon, too, its political fortunes suffered, and the country was able to elect a Hezbollah-agnostic President and Prime Minister after a long hiatus. Under the new domestic political order, calls for disarming Hezbollah became more strident as the militia was seen more as the cause of the insecurity than as a self-proclaimed deterrent against Israel.

Despite a tenuous ceasefire, Lebanon remains fragile; the scheduled second round of talks with Israel in Washington offers a sliver of hope

Conflict and engagement

Against this sombre backdrop, Israel and the U.S. suddenly launched a joint air campaign against Iran on February 28, 2026, assassinating Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in its first salvo. This shocked Hezbollah into attacking Israel with artillery, drones and missiles across the common border, breaking the 15-month ceasefire. The IDF responded in kind with intense air attacks on Hezbollah assets. Both sides internalised the lessons of the last round: Hezbollah used the interregnum to recoup its losses and make operational changes to avoid intelligence leakages. It revived guerrilla tactics, conserving its assets for a long war of attrition. It adopted a decentralised command structure and toned down its political rhetoric. The IDF initially avoided infantry engagements, deploying more armour and airpower.

After an Iranian ceasefire was announced on April 8, Tehran demanded that Lebanon be brought under its ambit. To the contrary, IDF intensified its attacks on Hezbollah, launching "100 air strikes in 10 minutes" and demolishing buildings without prior notice. The IDF depopulated much of the south to create, once again, a buffer zone south of the Litani river. After nine days of ferocious war, U.S. President Donald Trump declared a ceasefire on April 17. The announcement was preceded by a preliminary meeting on April 14 between the Israeli and Lebanese ambassadors in Washington, facilitated by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio. This engagement was noteworthy for many reasons. It was the first contact since the abortive Madrid process in the mid-1990s between the two states formally still at war. The meeting took place despite Hezbollah's stiff opposition and Iranian insistence on the matter being put under Iran-U.S. ceasefire negotiations. There was considerable opposition within Israel to the ceasefire from hardliners who wanted Hezbollah defanged. In the end, the interests of both the Israeli and Lebanese governments overlapped in hiving off the Iranian connection to Hezbollah. The second round of bilateral talks is scheduled to take place in Washington on April 23, amid sporadic violations of the ceasefire. The second round of Iran-U.S. negotiations in Islamabad, Pakistan, remains stalled.

This Washington process also faces considerable challenges. First, the respective objectives of the stakeholders differ: Beirut wants a permanent ceasefire, an IDF withdrawal to the international border supervised by the United Nations peacekeepers and avoidance of any new civil war, as the Lebanese armed forces are too weak to take on Hezbollah. Jerusalem's priority is just the opposite: to disarm Hezbollah even if it triggers a Lebanese civil war. On the other hand, Mr. Trump can hardly wait to conclude these negotiations to his list of peace deal trophies; he may eventually wish to include Lebanon among the Abraham Accord signatories. As Hezbollah is stubbornly unwilling to disarm, citing an existential threat from Israel, any reckless move in that direction could precipitate a civil war in a country still deeply fragmented along confessional/ethnic lines. This sensitive issue needs discreet handling, with Hezbollah being offered some assurances to persuade it to disarm. Besides, Lebanon, still recovering from the civil war (1975-1990), has faced two devastating conflicts with Israel in the past two years, which have left 5,282 people dead, displaced 1.2 million, and caused financial losses of $8.5 billion. By early 2026, 35% of Lebanese were living below the national poverty line.

Hope amid prolonged crisis

Lebanon today is a cautionary tale of nearly half a century of accumulated crises, which its ossified nomenklatura swept under the carpet. An early resolution of the Lebanese imbroglio is as elusive as it is important for the country, the entire region and beyond. More Lebanese live outside Lebanon than in the country itself. Further, Lebanon is the only Arab country with a significant proportion of Christians. In the past, tensions between various confessions have sucked in their co-religionist foreign backers, exacerbating the problems. The converse is also true: Lebanese militias have often meddled abroad. Hezbollah, for instance, acted as a protector of Syria's al-Assad regime and stirred the Shias in the Gulf states and supported al-Houthis in Yemen. At its best, a multi-ethnic Lebanon was a model state with a tolerant, productive and prosperous society that Indians related to. It was a civilisational bridge between Christian Europe and Muslim Arabs. It enriched the world beyond its microcosm – from philosopher Khalil Gibran to thinker Kamal Jumblatt and from historian Philip Hitti to Arabic singer Fairuz. The past half-century has tormented Lebanon with fratricidal civil wars overlaid with foreign causes. The current ceasefire and talks offer a sliver of hope that this jinx has finally been broken and the country can cautiously move towards normalcy.

Scaling climate adaptation from policy to grassroots

Anjana Rajagopalan

Programme Manager with the Climate Resilience Practice programme at WRI India

Arivudai Nambi Appadurai

Director of the Climate Resilience Practice programme at the World Resources Institute India

India is the ninth most climate-vulnerable country globally, with 430 extreme weather events recorded between 1995 and 2024, causing losses of $170 billion and impacting 1.3 billion people. India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for 2031-35 acknowledge these risks and emphasise the mainstreaming of climate resilience and adaptation into the country's development strategy.

The updated NDCs strengthen adaptation across coastal resilience, infrastructure, disaster preparedness, heat mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. This aligns with global commitments to triple adaptation finance by 2035 and the adoption of Belém Adaptation Indicators at COP30. However, achieving these goals will require sustained financing and institutionalising adaptation from national to the grass-root levels.

Among key adaptation efforts, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)'s National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) pilot spans 448 villages across 151 climate-vulnerable hotspots and maps risks in 651 districts, focusing on climate-smart agriculture and farmer capacity-building.

A model to watch

India's Economic Survey for 2025-26 recognises Tamil Nadu's Climate Resilient Villages (CRV) programme as a good practice. Under the Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission (TNCCM), with support from the World Resources Institute (WRI) India, the CRV takes a holistic approach across 11 vulnerable districts, in consultation with local communities and administration. Interventions span water management, flood/drought mitigation, waste management, renewable energy, biodiversity conservation, alternate livelihoods and climate information.

Scaling up such models can help build adaptive capacity throughout the country. However, India's efforts towards adaptation have been scattered which makes financing these efforts difficult. While India's Economic Survey 2025-26 estimates adaptation and resilience spending at 5.6% of GDP in FY22, the Union Budget 2026-27 remains skewed toward mitigation.

Adaptation can be advanced through coordinated governance, finance and local efforts

Financing adaptation action

Developing countries face an annual financing gap of $284-$339 billion through 2035, as per the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Adaptation Gap Report, 2025. As India looks to sharpen its adaptation focus, domestic resource mobilisation will be key – requiring a clear typology for adaptation finance (which is prioritisation of sectors and assessment of the resources required for each vulnerable sector). However, India's Draft Framework of Climate Finance Taxonomy (2025) remains largely mitigation-focused and looks at emission avoidance, emission intensity reduction (with possible adaptation co-benefits) and activities supporting transition in hard-to-abate sectors.

It is vital to quantify adaptation benefits such as avoidable losses and socio-economic and environmental benefits including mitigation co-benefits. A WRI study estimates a ten-fold return on adaptation investment, making a case for leveraging private and international investment towards adaptation. Adaptation facilities at the state-level can help identify bankable adaptation projects that map benefits and widen the resource base.

Additionally, domestic public finance should be streamlined by tracking adaptation activities within State budgets, following which the Ministry of Finance can mandate climate budgeting through State Finance Departments. This can be integrated within annual budgetary planning processes through a budget circular. Such a mandate must incorporate timeframes for prioritisation of adaptation action with a monitoring framework. This should be complemented with cross-department consultative approaches and capacity building at nodal departmental levels. NDCs are expected to be operationalised through a National Adaptation Plan, national missions and State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs). While most States drafted an initial SAPCC, only a few States submitted revisions in tune with NDC updates until 2030. Institutionalising planning requires regular climate vulnerability assessments at the State, district, and block levels, integrating socio-economic and livelihood factors. This calls for robust methodologies, updated data, capacity-building, and standardised monitoring, with periodic reviews and continuous data collection.

Adaptation strategies should ideally go beyond resilient infrastructure to encompass skill development, alternative livelihoods and guidelines for rehabilitation of affected populations. This can be done by leveraging existing State and district climate change cells or setting up new functional cells with a dedicated workforce. Clear reporting channels can further support cross-learning and timely interventions.

Facilitating locally led adaptation

Institutional mechanisms should extend to the level of urban local bodies and panchayati raj institutions to scale adaptation action. Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) was stressed at COP30. Co-developing resilience planning with communities – from planning and implementation to management, ownership, and leadership of needs-based interventions – is central to people-centric climate action. Applying place-based and context-specific approaches, such as extending the CRV initiative to different geographies, not only helps raise climate awareness but also enables communities to be a part of decision-making processes.

Preparedness for future climate impacts requires capacity-building and behavioural change across multiple levels. A whole-of-systems approach to adaptation is needed, where national commitments are met through grassroots action.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Record' voter turnout

The euphoria surrounding Tamil Nadu's 'historic voter turnout' in the 2026 Assembly elections deserves a more sober examination. The real story lies not in voter enthusiasm alone, but in a quiet statistical transformation engineered months before polling day. The Election Commission of India's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is the elephant in the room. During this exercise, a staggering 97 lakh names were removed from the rolls — on grounds of death, duplication, migration, and other discrepancies — while only 30 lakh new voters were added. The net result: Tamil Nadu's electorate shrank from 6.29 crore in 2021 to 5.73 crore in 2026, a reduction of nearly 67 lakh voters, or 10.45% of the total base. The arithmetic consequence of this is straightforward. When the denominator shrinks while the numerator remains roughly constant — or rises even marginally — the percentage climbs sharply. A simple back-of-the-envelope calculation confirms that the polling percentage would rise by nearly 10 percentage points from 2021 levels, even if not a single additional voter showed up at the booth.

Ramachandran J.,
Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu

Has a weakening of unionisation hurt workers?

PARLEY

Kingshuk Sarkar

Professor and Area Chair for general management and economics, Goa Institute of Management

Since March, the country has witnessed a number of agitations by workers, particularly by those in the manufacturing sector. In the background of these protests for minimum wages; expansion of the social security ambit; and against the contractualisation of jobs, the role of trade unions have come up for discussion. There have been concerns about the impact of deunionisation and how it has affected the workers. Kingshuk Sarkar and Fredy K. Thazhath discuss the question in a conversation moderated by **A. M. Jigeesh**.

Fredy K. Thazhath

National President, Trade Union Centre of India

What is the extent of the deunionisation among Indian workers?

Kingshuk Sarkar: Amidst the shifting global, political and economic landscape, the nature of the Indian labour movement, particularly the trade union movement, has undergone substantial changes over the last four decades. Before 1991, unions had relatively better bargaining power, mainly in the public sector. Post-liberalisation, mainstream trade unions gradually suffered from declining bargaining power as the labour market became predominantly informal, in the sense that these workers lack employment contracts or do not have access to institutional social security.

Mainstream trade unions suffered from fragmentation and ideological divisions and this weakened trade union effectiveness. Trade unions mostly focused on the regular permanent workforce; and their penetration among the growing segment of contract workers was not high. Global competition and the weakening of regulatory regimes led to the deterioration in labour standards and wages. Secure, well-paid jobs have declined, replaced by flexible work arrangements and non-standard employment, including part-time, short-time, and self-employment. Also, younger workers have a negative perception about trade unions. Today, the unionisation rate among the workforce is only 6.3% – 1.8% in the private sector and 11.8% in the public sector. The recent enactment of the Labour Code is going to further aggravate the situation.

Fredy K. Thazhath: Challenges to the trade union movement have happened not just because of empirical adversities. It's because of the sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism and the resulting drive for fetishistic methods of outsourcing and fragmentation of industries. Unlike in many other capitalist countries, it was the working class that fanned the fire of the Indian freedom struggle. The working class fought colonial rulers compelling them to make labour laws. When the republic was born, the fruits of those labour laws were reaped by the workers for the first two to three decades, called the dirigisme period. The public sector grew. But after the Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) policies came in 1991, this was not the case. There has been a counter offensive from the side of capital, especially from finance capital and its adjutants. It is not that contract labour grew because of the timidity of the existing trade union movement, it is because of the impact of a general onslaught upon the working class, and because of the privatisation of public sector units, which led to those sections of the working class getting trimmed off, lessening its bargaining power. So it is a phenomena-based outcome, not just a behavioural outcome.

Living on the edge: Police officers patrol a street after workers demanded a wage hike, amid soaring prices, in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, on April 13. REUTERS

Forming a trade union is a fundamental right, but they are often seen as a "problem". What has been the Indian experience?

KS: The growth of Indian trade unions and political developments are very closely related. Since 1991, we have seen a lot of outsourcing happening. A person may be working for an organised sector, but many do not have a direct relation with the employer. So sometimes it becomes difficult for trade unions to engage or mobilise workers as union members. Also, because of the political affiliations of mainstream trade unions, there have been misgivings among the workers as they see trade unions as an extension of the political ideology. In the public sector, employment decreased from 19.6 million in 1991 to 17.5 million in 2008. Economic reforms lead to the closure or downsizing of uncompetitive public sector units and traditional industries.

FKT: In regions such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu,

> Mainstream trade unions suffered from fragmentation and ideological divisions and this weakened trade union effectiveness. Trade unions mostly focused on the regular permanent workforce; and their penetration among the growing segment of contract workers was not high
>
> KINGSHUK SARKAR

when general strikes occur, contract unions are a part of it. The contracted workers are also unionised as separate entities. Even with this kind of an arrangement, the general drive was for the abolition of contractualisation. Now, because of LPG policies and the diminishing democratic atmosphere in the country – unlike in the days of the freedom struggle, when the working class struggle and the democratic struggle to overthrow imperialism went hand in hand – things have gotten worse. After Independence, the general democratic movement among the people helped to galvanise the worker-peasant alliance. It was not simply the legislative or statute part of trade union rights that helped the movement. But now because of the general onslaught, the working class movement has begun to fight defensively. The question of abolishing contractualisation and the question of making a living wage have gone behind the question of manifesting a minimum wage.

The present crisis is around a minimum wage for workers and increasing prices. Have the presence of trade unions helped the government and industries to amicably address these problems?

FKT: When trade union leaders are in house arrest, there is no furore in Parliament or Assemblies. There are no headlines in major newspapers. This is a kind of de-democratisation. A trade union is an agency within the capitalist system. It is not a revolutionary movement. So even though it is within the system, it is curtailed and not at all talked about. And this is because of the political and economic perspective of LPG policies.

KS: The apparent reason behind this unrest in the national capital region is that the minimum wage was not enough for subsistence. State governments decide the minimum wage, determined by a minimum wage advisory board. It is a tripartite, equally represented committee, with representatives from the trade union, the employers and the government. So trade unions have a role to play in the revision of minimum wages. They should be more vocal within this tripartite labour administrative structure so that the voices of workers are raised and States are compelled to revise minimum wages.

Another issue is that labour market dynamics are creating more problems for trade unions because we have so much of surplus labour coming out of agriculture. Agriculture provides only 14% of the national income, but the employment share of agriculture is more than 45%. This labour needs to be meaningfully employed in the industrial and tertiary sector, which is not happening.

The implementation of the four Labour Codes is being projected as a solution. What do you think is the way forward for addressing the problems of workers?

KS: The Labour Codes do not favour the workers, it is in some cases favouring the employers. However, it is not a huge change from the laws that we already had. Under the labour laws, minimum wages become more progressive because minimum wage has been added to all employments.

However, in the last 40 years, whatever that has been already mentioned in the labour laws have not been implemented. Rather than formalising the informal, our labour force has become more informal over the years in spite of a protective labour law framework being there. So I think the situations are different but we should go back to the basics. Whatever that is there for the workers should be implemented.

FKT: It is a fight for survival. In the last three decades, apart from defensive general strikes, nobody can cite sector-wise indefinite strikes or floor level strikes with aggressive demands. Now, it is evident from the Labour Codes that the capitalists are not happy with even contractualisation. The state, and the oligarchy corporates are going for 'fixed term employment'. This is a phenomena-based situation, because of which phenomena-based outbreaks happens.

Under the Labour Codes, trade unions cannot be formed without 10% of the workforce; unlike in the earlier case of eight workers coming together and forming a trade union. There is no statutory supervision by the Labour Department at all. This is a catastrophic phenomena-based outcome, and not a behavioural issue of existing trade unions.

To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

NOTEBOOK

A season to try and understand the people's pulse

While journalists cannot ignore digital platforms, only field reporting offers a clear understanding of the public sentiment

D. Suresh Kumar

As India headed for a snap poll after the fall of the I.K. Gujral government, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi was to make her debut election speech on January 11, 1998, in Sriperumbudur, where former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated seven years earlier. Among the crowd when one raised the slogan "Sonia Gandhi...", the rest responded: "Zindabad." I asked them what it meant. They had no idea. Noticing my smile, one asked, "Saar, you tell us. Did we say something wrong?" I shrugged. The next instance, he switched to "Vandemataram!" and looked at me for approval. I smiled again and walked to the press gallery to hear Sonia Gandhi say: "I stand today on the soil drenched by the blood of my husband who died a martyr for the unity of the country."

Such encounters were common during the elections. Two years earlier, amid resentment against Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha (as she spelt her name then), an elderly woman loudly criticised the regime. But when asked whom she would vote for, she replied firmly: "*Rettai Illai*" (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)'s 'Two Leaves'). Wasn't that Jayalalitha's symbol? "*Adhu MGR chinnam* (That's MGR's symbol)," she said, revealing her emotional bond with party founder M. G. Ramachandran.

Villagers were eager to talk – offering flavoured goli soda or tea, asking which paper we worked for, and whether their photos would be published. Some, though, shied away from the camera. Reading the public mood was rarely easy unless there was a clear "wave." Some voters would ask, "Who do you want us to vote for?" Others wore their loyalty literally, with party tattoos. A Scheduled Caste voter in Gummidipoondi said, "We first voted for MGR. We should not change midway. Till our death it will be '*Rettai Illai*'."

Wave elections – such as the 2004 Lok Sabha polls or the 1996 and 2011 Assembly elections – made trends easier to spot. In 2004, it was clear in the Vanniyar regions of Cuddalore, Villupuram and Dharmapuri that superstar Rajinikanth's appeal against the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) had limited effect; even his ardent fans were politically divided. Ground realities often diverged from city-centric assumptions. In 2011, despite the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) delivering free TVs, subsidised rice, and gold for mangalsutra, the decisive issue in many districts was the prolonged power cuts. Livelihood disruptions mattered more than policy narratives, pushing the DMK to the third place in the Assembly.

Even welfare schemes were viewed differently. In Mettupalayam, an elderly man criticised the Kalaignar Health Insurance Scheme: "Why pay private hospitals? Improve government hospitals instead." Farmers, in the early years of the rural employment scheme, complained of labour shortages making agriculture unviable. Such interactions enriched reporting. In 1998, at a Communist Party of India (Marxist) rally in Chennai, an elderly woman fumed over a 25-50 paise bus fare hike. After the Lok Sabha defeat, Chief Minister Karunanidhi rolled it back.

Now, often, the first question we encounter is: "YouTuber ah?". Voters and journalists are influenced by the noise of social media – party IT narratives, know-all commentators offering multiple takes on the same topic across platforms, confident "Forrest Gump"-like voices waxing eloquent on every event/personality, and even food vloggers pushing paid political content. Politicians, too, have adapted – funding YouTube channels, and staging interviews with celebrities.

In this clutter, identifying real issues is harder than ever. While journalists cannot ignore the digital discourse, only field reporting offers a clearer sense of the public pulse. When journalism falls short, it is often because it echoes social media narratives or theorisation instead of listening to people on the ground.

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PICTURE OF THE WEEK

The beat of the polls

Drummer boys: Artists who were engaged by political parties for a rally return home as the campaigning period for the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections drew to a close in Ramanathapuram on April 21. The State went to polls on Thursday, with voter turnout exceeding 80%. BALACHANDAR L.

FROM THE ARCHIVES — The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 24, 1976

First consignment of fireworks shipped to U.S.

Madras, April 23: The first consignment of 875 packets of Sivakasi-made fireworks valued at Rs. 1.6 lakhs was shipped to the United States to-day.

This is the first time that fireworks are being sent to the U.S. meant for its bicentennial celebrations. To-day's consignment is part of an order of Rs. 15 lakhs secured by a fireworks firm of Sivakasi.

Mr. S.P. Ambrose, Chairman, Madras Port Trust, who inaugurated the first shipment aboard an American liner S.S. Alaskan Mail congratulated the Sivakasi firm on having broken the monopoly of China in the U.S. market. A great responsibility lay on the fireworks manufacturers not only in ensuring the quality and retaining the U.S. market but also in increasing the export of fireworks to other countries. He called upon manufacturers, shippers and chambers of commerce to join together in increasing the exports.

Mr. K.S.G Haja Shareeff, President, Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, presiding said this prestigious shipment would pave the way to develop this trade and make it an important item of export from the country.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 24, 1926

Protecting public against money-lenders

London, April 23: A Government undertaking to do its utmost to secure the passage of the Bill to protect the public against the money-lenders were given by Sir Wm. Joynsou-Hicks in the House of Commons and the Bill passed its second reading without division, after some objection had been raised with regard to some of its provisions. The mover of the Bill, Major R. Glyn said that the Bill laid down that the moneylenders shall take out an annual licence at a cost of £15. No money-lenders circulars or advertisement shall be sent to anybody except at the latter's written request.

From Page One

93% polling as 152 seats in Bengal go to polls

A clash broke out in Murshidabad district under Naoda Assembly seat as Trinamool Congress supporters raised slogans against Aam Janata Unnayan Party founder Humayun Kabir, who is contesting the polls from the seat. Personnel of the Central armed police forces prevented both Mr. Kabir and his supporters and Trinamool workers from coming towards each other but the situation remained tense. The region has been volatile since Wednesday evening when a crude bomb was hurled at the Trinamool candidate.

In two separate incidents of violence, BJP candidates were targeted on polling day. The BJP candidate from Kumarganj Assembly seat in Dakshin Dinajpur, Subhendu Sarkar, was chased and beaten up by a group of people when he was visiting a polling booth.

In the video captured by media persons, locals are seen chasing and beating the BJP candidate, even as his security guard is trying to resist the attack. Five persons have been arrested in connection with the violence. In another incident, the vehicle of BJP candidate from Asansol Dakshin, Agnimitra Paul was attacked.

Polling was held across 16 districts – eight each in southern and northern Bengal.

The second phase of polling will be held on April 29 for the remaining 142 seats, which are located in and around Kolkata. There are a total of 294 seats in the Assembly and the results will be out on May 4.

SC questions ED's claim of rule of law breach

The top law officer submitted that the argument of rule of law was raised to establish the *locus standi* of the ED, acting in a "representative capacity", to approach the top court in an Article 32 writ petition to enforce the fundamental rights of its officials whose personal liberty and dignity as citizens were threatened by "engineered or orchestrated" police FIRs.

The ED and its Deputy Director Robin Bansal have filed a plea seeking a CBI probe into the incident.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for the State government, argued that the Centre, and not the ED, ought to have approached the Supreme Court against the State by filing an original suit under Article 131 of the Constitution.

Mr. Mehta said a Centre versus State dispute did not arise here, adding that an Article 131 suit was filed only if the dispute was of a federal nature. "This is a law and order issue. The president of the ruling party, who is also the highest executive of the State, along with officials who happen to draw their salaries from the Centre are on one side here...Besides, State governments, including the States of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu [in the Governor case], have repeatedly approached the Supreme Court under Article 32, and been entertained by this court," Mr. Mehta said. He said the filing of writ petitions by States should be "discouraged". "Then should we dismiss this petition?" Justice Mishra asked.

Mr. Mehta replied in the negative, saying ED officials too had approached the Supreme Court in their personal capacity in this case.

Trump orders strike against Iran vessels

Iran has vowed it would keep the strait closed to all but a trickle of approved vessels for as long as the U.S. Navy blockades its ports, brushing off demands from Mr. Trump to both reopen Hormuz and surrender its enriched uranium.

"The first revenue received from the Strait of Hormuz tolls was deposited into the Central Bank account," said deputy Speaker of Iran's parliament, Hamidreza Hajibabaei, according to Tasnim news agency.

Air defence systems were activated in parts of Tehran on Thursday evening amid reports of hostile aerial activity, Iranian state media said in the first such reports since a ceasefire began. The Mehr news agency reported that the systems were activated in several parts of the capital to counter "hostile targets", without elaborating further.

The Pentagon on Thursday announced in a social media post that U.S. forces had "carried out a maritime interdiction and right-of-visit boarding of the sanctioned stateless vessel *M/T Majestic X* transporting oil from Iran, in the Indian Ocean".

The post included footage of U.S. military personnel rappelling from helicopters onto the deck of a large tanker.

The statement said the U.S. would "continue global maritime enforcement to disrupt illicit networks and interdict vessels providing material support to Iran, wherever they operate".

While strikes around the region have mostly ceased since the two-week-old truce began, there has been no letup in the confrontation over Hormuz, with both sides seeking economic leverage – only for Mr. Trump to announce an indefinite ceasefire to create space for more talks.

"A complete ceasefire only has meaning if it is not violated through a naval blockade," said Iran's parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf.Meanwhile, it was still unclear when, or if, the two sides would meet again in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, where mediators are trying to bring the countries together to reach a diplomatic deal.

Cong. slams Modi govt. on Israel-Gaza conflict stance

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday accused the Narendra Modi government of maintaining "silence" on the ongoing conflict in Gaza, alleging that no previous dispensation had displayed such "solidarity" with a "murderous regime" in Israel.

In a post on X, Congress communication chief Jairam Ramesh said the Prime Minister's response to Israel's military actions in Gaza and Lebanon reflected "moral cowardice". He flagged the continued displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank.

"There has been no government that has shown so much solidarity with the murderous Israeli regime as the Modi Govt that has betrayed all human values, apart from traditional Indian principles and positions," Mr. Ramesh said in his post on X. The Congress has, in recent weeks, stepped up its criticism of the government's West Asia policy. The party also criticised Mr. Modi's visit to Israel earlier this year, stating that it came at a time when civilian casualties in Gaza were mounting.

'Indian ties with Africa signal stability in a turbulent world'

Jaishankar highlights that India-Africa partnership is rooted in shared anti-colonial history and strengthened through capacity building, development cooperation, and strategic engagement

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

India's relationship with Africa delivers a message of "stability in a turbulent world", External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Thursday. Speaking at the launch of the theme, website and logo of the upcoming fourth India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV), Mr. Jaishankar said India's ties with Africa were rooted in the common struggle for freedom from colonial rule. He highlighted development partnership and capacity building as key areas of collaboration between the two sides.

"As the world navigates through complex geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges, our partnership assumes particular significance. It will be a message of stability in a turbulent world, of reliability in an uncertain one and of solidarity in difficult times," Mr. Jaishankar said, presenting the India-Africa partnership as a process that will strengthen institutions and empower people. The Minister made the remarks while launching the theme, logo and website of IAFS-IV, to be held from May 28 to 31. The event was attended by New Delhi-based heads of missions and Ambassadors of African countries. The third edition of the India-Africa Forum Summit was held in October 2015. The theme of the upcoming summit is "Enduring partnership – shared vision".

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with African Ambassadors and delegates at the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi. ANI

Mr. Jaishankar's remarks obliquely referred to the situation in the Gulf region, which has come into focus over the past two months due to the U.S.-Israel war on Iran that has triggered a global energy crisis. In view of disruptions in the supply of essential items such as petroleum, natural gas, and fertilizers, India is looking for stable alternative suppliers, with several African countries seen as potential partners. With disruptions in fertilizer supplies from Gulf countries such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, India is expected to focus on Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Morocco to meet demand ahead of the next monsoon season.

Mr. Jaishankar highlighted India's long-term commitment, noting that the opening of 17 new diplomatic missions in Africa has taken the total to 46. With this, India's diplomatic footprint is now visible in "every region of the continent", he said.

'Living bridge'

He also referred to the three million-strong Indian diaspora in Africa as a "living bridge" connecting the two regions. He cited institutions such as the IIT, Zanzibar, the National Forensic Science University in Uganda, the Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Rwanda, and Centres of Information Technology in several African countries as examples of "people-centric cooperation".

Mr. Jaishankar said that outside the South Asian neighbourhood, Africa is the largest recipient of Indian overseas development support. "India has placed development cooperation and capacity-building programmes at the core of its partnership with Africa," he said.

India, Egypt advance their defence cooperation

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

India and Egypt advanced their defence cooperation at the 11th Joint Defence Committee meeting held in Cairo from April 20 to 22, outlining a road map to deepen bilateral engagement.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the Indian delegation, led by Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) Amitabh Prasad, engaged with senior Egyptian defence officials to review progress since the previous meeting and identify new avenues of collaboration. Both sides agreed on a bilateral defence cooperation plan for 2026-27, focusing on expanding military engagements, intensifying joint training exchanges, boosting maritime security cooperation, and increasing the scope of military exercises.

The two nations agreed to work towards a defence industry cooperation plan, exploring opportunities for co-development and co-production, it added. The inaugural Navy-to-Navy staff talks were held, underlining the importance of maritime cooperation.

Cong. questions EC notice to Kharge, alleges ulterior motives, casual approach

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday wrote to the Election Commission (EC) questioning the issuance of a show-cause notice to party president Mallikarjun Kharge, alleging "ulterior motives" and a "casual, routine manner" in the notice issued to Mr. Kharge.

In a letter addressed to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the two Election Commissioners, Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh flagged that two notices bearing the same reference number and date – April 22 – had been issued but signed by different officials, with no clarity on whether one had been withdrawn.

Mr. Ramesh also pointed to discrepancies in the contents of the notices, noting that while one cited a complaint by Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien, the other version uploaded on the EC website omitted any mention of the complainant.

This, he said suggested that notices were being issued mechanically based on complaints aligned with the ruling party's position.

> It almost seems the CEC is executing the notice as a formality rather than as an act in discharge of natural justice
>
> **JAIRAM RAMESH**
> Congress general secretary (communications)

The Congress further objected to the 24-hour deadline given to Mr. Kharge to respond, describing it as insufficient given his ongoing poll campaign engagements. The party has sought a week's time to submit a reply.

"It almost seems the CEC is executing the notice as a formality rather than as an act in discharge of natural justice. We seek time to file a detailed response within one week and also for a senior delegation of Congress leaders to present the same," Mr. Ramesh's letter said.

Code violations

The party also accused the EC of overlooking alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by senior BJP leaders.

Mr. Ramesh cited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent address to the nation following the failure to pass the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, claiming that his remarks included direct political attacks on the Congress, including accusing of foeticide during an election period.

"It almost seems that an attempt is being made to deliberately overlook the clear and unequivocal explanation about the context in which the words were uttered, so as to find some way to take action against the Congress president. Unfortunately, it smacks of ulterior motives," Mr. Ramesh's five page letter to Chief Election Commissioner said.

U.P. CM warns of possible unrest on Labour Day

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has cautioned against possible industrial unrest in the State around May 1 (Labour Day) and has instructed district administrations to be on high alert.

The directive comes days after a massive protest by industrial workers in Gautam Buddha Nagar district.

"Officials were directed to remain extremely alert and ensure effective preventive action before any situation arises. Referring to recent attempts to create industrial unrest in certain areas, he (Mr. Adityanath) stated that although the situation is currently normal, there is a possibility of renewed attempts between April 30 and May 2. Industrial unrest will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and such malicious attempts must be firmly thwarted," a statement said. He made the remarks while chairing a high-level review meeting via video-conferencing on Wednesday.

MEA terms Trump's 'hellhole' post on India 'inappropriate'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Donald Trump

The Centre on Thursday called posts by U.S. President Donald Trump that quoted derogatory remarks about India and Indian immigrants as "uninformed, inappropriate and in poor taste".

The posts, which included a video by American right-wing anchor Michael Savage and the four-page text of his comments, called countries such as India and China "hellholes" while criticising U.S. immigration laws.

The response from the Ministry of External Affairs came after Opposition members and former diplomats criticised the government for not offering a stronger response to the U.S. The Congress, in particular, mounted a sharp attack accusing the Prime Minister of "being afraid of" the U.S. in the face of repeated insults.

"The remarks are obviously uninformed, inappropriate and in poor taste. They certainly do not reflect the reality of the India-U.S relationship, which has long been based on mutual respect and shared interests," the MEA spokesperson said late on Thursday night. Earlier in the day, at a briefing, the government had decided to take a safer approach however, with the MEA spokesperson saying only that they had "seen some reports".

Addressing viewers of the "Savage Report" on Newsmax channel, Mr. Savage had said that the U.S. had gone "from the melting pot to the chamber pot", as a result of the relaxed immigration laws, comments that were then reposted by Mr. Trump on his "Truth Social" page . "A baby here becomes an instant citizen, and then they bring the entire family in from China or India or some other hellhole on the planet," he said, comparing Indians and Chinese immigrants unfavourably to "European Americans of today and their ancestors" including Irish, Italian, Polish, Lithuanians, Romanians and Russians, and questioning their loyalty to America.

Embassy response

Asked about whether the view amplified by Mr. Trump was endorsed by the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor, the Embassy spokesperson quoted Mr. Trump as saying that "India is a great country with a very good friend of mine (Narendra Modi) at the top". The U.S. embassy did not explain or backpedal the comments, which is understood to have upset the government.

SC stays HC verdict giving life sentence to Amit Jogi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the implementation of a Chhattisgarh High Court verdict that convicted Amit Jogi, the son of former Chief Minister Ajit Jogi, for the murder of Nationalist Congress Party leader Ramvatar Jaggi in 2003 and handed him a life imprisonment.

The Bench issued notice to the CBI and stayed the operation of the verdict on the "facts and circumstances of the case".

Bombay HC raps NIA for gaps in Malegaon blast investigation

Chinmay Gaikwad
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court, which on Wednesday quashed the charges against four persons accused in the 2006 Malegaon bomb blasts, has criticised the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for gaps in the probe.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Shyam C. Chandak held that there was insufficient material on record to proceed against the appellants. The appellants are Rajendra Chaudhary, Dhan Singh, Manohar Ram Singh Narwaria, and Lokesh Sharma. The copy of the court order was made available on Thursday.

The Bench observed that the Special Judge under the NIA Act had not applied judicial mind to the materials placed before the court and had considered evidence that is not admissible in law to frame charges. The case relates to a series of bomb blasts that took place in Malegaon on September 8, 2006, killing 31 persons while 312 persons suffered injuries.

The High Court noted that the NIA had projected a story based primarily on confessional statements of the appellants, as well as retracted statements of witnesses and previously accused persons. The court found that the NIA had conducted what amounted to a fresh investigation, which the Supreme Court has held is not permitted under law.

Regarding the test identification parade conducted by the NIA, the court observed that it took place about six years after the blast. The Bench stated that such a delay strips the parade of any probative value.

APPEAL

Master Dakshit Shende, Christian Medical College, Hospital No.AJ82370, 5 years has been Diagnosed to have Beta Thalassemia Major. This is a type of Lifethreatening Blood Disorder. The best option for him would be to undergo Allogeneic Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Transplant (PBSCT). The Estimated cost of PBSCT at this Hospital is Approximately Rs.16, 00,000/-.

Please send donation however small by Cheque/D.D/M.O Fav. **Save Poor Lives** A/c Dakshit Shende, **Our A/c Details:** S/B A/c No. 20000913487. S.B.I. R.A.Puram, IFSC CODE:SBIN0001855. Please Donate by G-pay No.9884607377, UPI Id: savepoorlives@oksbi. Donations are exempted under 80G of I.T. ACT.

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Poll duty: Women at a polling booth assist voters with their queries in Chennai on Thursday. S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

Celebrity voters: Actor Rajinikanth and his daughter Soundarya cast their votes at Stella Maris College, Chennai. R. RAGU

Braving the heat: People line up to vote on a sultry day in Nandigram, West Bengal, on Thursday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Inked fingers: Senior citizens show their fingers after casting their votes in Nandigram on Thursday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

CEC hails highest-ever poll turnout in T.N., Bengal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar hailed the voters of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu on Thursday for recording the highest-ever polling percentage since Independence.

While Tamil Nadu recorded a polling percentage of 85.15%, West Bengal (Phase-I) registered 92.88%.

Mr. Gyanesh Kumar, along with Election Commissioners S.S. Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, kept a close watch on the polling via live webcasting which was available in 100% of the polling stations in both States, the EC said.

"Highest ever percentage of polling in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu since Independence – ECI salutes every voter in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu," Mr. Kumar said.

Voter-friendly initiatives, including easily identifiable colour photos of candidates on EVM ballot papers, mobile deposit facility, and newly designed voter information slips (VIS) for easy readability, were implemented.

Jhaal muri heats up campaign as Modi, Mamata spice up speeches

PM says his savouring the dish has 'stung' many people; CM asks him if he has ever had fish, pushing Trinamool narrative that BJP is a vegetarian-only party; Modi brings up reservation for women in Parliament, saying Trinamool voted against it

Shrabana Chatterjee
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Election fervour: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a roadshow in Kolkata on Thursday; (right) Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee with party MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay during an election campaign in Kolkata. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP, PTI

As campaigning for the second phase of West Bengal election picked up on Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee sparred over *jhaal muri* (spicy puffed rice).

Four days ago, Mr. Modi took a break from back-to-back public meetings and savoured *jhaal muri* from a shop at Jhargram and since then Mr. Modi's snack break has become the talking point in campaigns in the State.

"*Jhaal muri maine khai, jhaal Trinamool ko lagi* (I had spicy puffed rice, but Trinamool felt the heat)," Mr. Modi said at a public rally in Krishnanagar on Thursday. In an oblique reference to the Trinamool, he said that the spicy *jhaal muri* had "stung" a lot of people.

Ms. Banerjee, the Trinamool Congress chairperson, wasted no time and responded to the jibe. "*Jhaal murir jhaal kheye amra obhosto. Kintu apni ki konodino maach kheyechen?* (We are used to the heat of spicy puffed rice. But have you ever had fish?)," she asked at a public meeting in Kolkata's Bowbazar area.

The Chief Minister went on to say that she believed in eating all varieties of food, and did not discriminate based on food preferences, taking a jibe at the BJP, and furthering the Trinamool's claim of the BJP being a "veg-only" party.

"The BJP government had brought a proposal for 33% reservation for women in Parliament, but the Trinamool voted against it. The Trinamool has taken away the rights of women in Bengal. Here, the way the Trinamool has hurt the honour of women, the atrocities committed against them, your vote will answer for it," Mr. Modi said.

Guarantees to women

The PM also gave "10 guarantees" to the women of Bengal, including strict action against people who engage in violence against women and construction of women police stations in every block. He also promised ₹3,000 to every woman of Bengal under the Matri Shakti Vandan Yojana scheme and ₹50,000 to each woman for her graduation.

"There is a storm of change here. In the first phase of the elections, the huge turnout of women and youth against the TMC has been witnessed by the whole nation. The bumper elections show that fear is losing and faith is winning... I want to tell the young voters of Bengal, this is the correct time to rip off the harsh government," Mr. Modi said.

Echoing the sentiments of the PM, Home Minister Amit Shah said that after May 5, if BJP came to power, *didis* (women) of Bengal will not have to buy bus tickets under the new government.

Meanwhile, Ms. Banerjee said that the BJP did not offer cash benefits to women through any scheme, but rather took away their money through "demonetisation".

"What have you done for the people of West Bengal, why should people vote for you?" she asked.

Relief as West Bengal sees bonhomie amid bitter political rivalry

Shrabana Chatterjee
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

BJP's Dilip Ghosh was seen exchanging pleasantries with his Trinamool rival Pradip Sarkar

The first phase of polling for 152 seats in the West Bengal Assembly election on Thursday witnessed the usual scenes of violence, with supporters of rival parties targeting each other. However, there were a few exceptions where political courtesy took precedence over political rivalry.

After a bitterly contested election for the Kharagpur Sadar Assembly seat, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Dilip Ghosh was seen exchanging pleasantries with his rival Trinamool Congress candidate Pradip Sarkar.

"I do not think that we will meet, but here we meet again," Mr. Ghosh was seen telling Mr. Sarkar. The former West Bengal BJP president said that he had a decade-long friendship with the Trinamool rival and the relationship would continue. Both the candidates were seen shaking hands. The BJP leader also expressed hope that this should be the model for the entire West Bengal. The Trinamool candidate said that except for a few places, where there were technical glitches, the polling was peaceful in the constituency.

The exchange of political niceties was not only limited to Kharagpur Sadar. At Taldangra in Bankura district, BJP candidate Souvik Patra was seen touching the feet of Trinamool candidate Falguni Singhababu. Both the candidates bumped into each other at booth number 224 of Shalbani Primary School in Talda village.

"The BJP always believes in politics of courtesy. I met him and sought his blessings. This is nothing new," the BJP candidate said.

In another example of extending support to voters whose names have been removed from electoral rolls, some voters of the Jagtai area of Devipur in the Suti Assembly constituency in Murshidabad district wore black badges to polling booths.

59% voter turnout recorded in bypoll to Umreth Assembly seat

The Hindu Bureau
AHMEDABAD

A voter turnout of 59.04% was recorded in Thursday's byelection to the Umreth Assembly constituency in Gujarat's Anand district, according to election authorities.

Polling began at 7 a.m. and was conducted across 306 stations. No untoward incidents were reported.

The bypoll was necessitated by the death of sitting BJP MLA Govind Parmar last month. The contest is primarily between BJP candidate Harshad Govindbhai Parmar and Congress nominee Bhrugurajsinh Chauhan. Both candidates cast their votes earlier in the day.

Three Independent candidates and one nominee from a lesser-known party are also in the fray.

A total of 2,45,623 voters are eligible to participate in the election. Around 1,500 personnel have been deployed.

The 'Pawar influence' over Baramati's political legacy

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit
MUMBAI

The politics of Baramati has remained the same for almost six decades. Even as the political map of Maharashtra changed, the dynamics of this constituency in western Maharashtra's sugar belt centred on one family - the Pawars. First, it was Sharad Pawar and then he made way for his nephew Ajit Pawar. And even as the NCP split, the Pawars stayed.

But after Ajit Pawar's sudden death in an air crash on January 28 this year, Baramati is not the same as before. The aspirations of the younger generation of the Pawar family, the BJP's efforts to make inroads, and the dilemma of the NCP and NCP (SP) cadre raise questions about the future of the Pawar bastion and the battle of inheritance within the family.

Baramati in Maharashtra went to the polls on Thursday. In a constituency that had voted Ajit to power for eight consecutive terms, his wife and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar held a silent campaign over the past few days as the Mahayuti candidate for the byelection. And while the Maha Vikas Aghadi, and particularly the Pawar family, did not field a candidate against her, they did not discount the possibility of a 'Pawar versus Pawar' battle in the 2029 Assembly election. After Ms. Sunetra's son Jay Pawar said the party workers wanted him to contest the 2029 polls, NCP(SP) leader Rohit Pawar threw his hat in the ring. Mr. Rohit said, "Whatever decision the party takes, one has to obey. If *kaki* [Sunetra Pawar] is not going to contest in 2029, the next election can be an all-party election. There was a Pawar versus Pawar fight in the Lok Sabha as well as the Vidhan Sabha elections even when Ajit Pawar was alive..."

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, right, and Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar during a Sangta Sabha in Baramati. PTI

But cousin Yugendra Pawar, who had fought the 2024 Vidhan Sabha election against his uncle Ajit, said the family was together.

The senior members of the Pawar family were quick to distance themselves from Mr. Rohit's comments. "We are all still in a state of shock. As a family, we are always together. Neither Yugendra, nor Jay said anything wrong... Ultimately, saaheb (Sharad Pawar) takes the decision," Shrinivas Pawar told *The Hindu*.

Recently, the Congress announced that it will field a candidate in Baramati for the 2029 Assembly election. The BJP too has started making inroads in Baramati. Its presence during the current election was felt overwhelmingly, NCP (SP) cadres said.

'Broader Left unity is crucial to find our way back to the Bengal Assembly'

The Left's vote share has declined drastically in West Bengal and it needs a 'critical mass' to get back into the Assembly, says the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation general secretary; he calls the SIR exercise 'the beginning of disempowerment', says the Communist movement must pay attention to rural Bengal and address the issues of the new generation, such as the Noida protests

INTERVIEW

Dipankar Bhattacharya

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

There is only one kind of Left in Bengal – the oppositional Left – and Left unity is crucial "to find our way back" to the West Bengal Assembly, says Dipankar Bhattacharya, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation general secretary, speaking on the party's alliance with the Left Front in Bengal. Edited excerpts.

The Left has struggled electorally in Bengal in the past decade. How do you plan to get back into the Assembly?

We need a critical mass to get back into the Assembly. The Left vote share has declined drastically in Bengal, and we hope to get a good vote share in at least a few seats to break into the Assembly this time. A broader Left unity is the way to find our way back into the Assembly even though it is a difficult proposition. Even though the Left had been in power in the State for over 34 years, we contested outside the alliance and fought independently. But now, there is only one kind of Left in Bengal – the oppositional Left. There is no Left in power; that is why a broader Left unity is crucial to find our way back to the Assembly.

Young voters, who are a major deciding factor in the elections, largely perceive the Left as an outdated force. What is the strategy to change this perception and gain their loyalty?

The new voters have not seen the Left Front in power. They have only seen the Trinamool Congress and BJP in power. First-time voter experience matters the most, we need to pay attention to that. We must also pay attention to rural Bengal, that was the mainstay. If there is no revival of the Left in rural Bengal, there can be no revival at all. So, any idea of urban middle-class-orientated, social-media-orientated, digital revival, without physical revival will not help. We need to address the issues of the new generation, like the wages protest in Noida, the R.G. Kar movement, Reclaim The Night protests, the Transgender Bill... What are the young generations demanding? We have to keep addressing these issues instead of being moralistic, instead of being judgmental, instead of writing off the people who have not voted for us... then the young generation will find their way back to the Left.

PTI

The Special Intensive Revision led to massive deletions. Do you think the election results after these deletions will be a true people's mandate?

Twenty-seven lakh people are being disenfranchised, it is a huge number. Even if the number was smaller, any disenfranchisement affects the quality of the mandate. This is unprecedented and sinister. In the long run it will affect the future of the very existence of those 27 lakh people. If you look at Bihar now, 22 lakh people were disenfranchised, now the government says we are going to take their ration cards away... their driving licences away. This is only the beginning of disempowerment. This is like rendering a whole section of citizens invalid. I don't know what it really would amount to. And the number goes on across India. So effectively we are looking at a population of a few crore people who will have no rights. They will be like illegal immigrants in their own land. Going by [Union Home Minister] Amit Shah's words – delete, detect and deport.

We have seen anger among people about the name deletions. Do you think all the protests were political, as is being claimed, or were they organic as well?

The SIR process has been a major harassment for Bengal, more than for other States. New things such as 'logical discrepancies' and 'under adjudication' were introduced, all kinds of harassment played out. So I think this is a people's protest. I refuse to look at it through political lens. If you are able to defend somebody, save somebody's vote, we must do that even if their political ideologies do not align with us. The protests are about the vote of every citizen of the country. The SIR process may have a political motive, a very selective, targeted exclusion exercise. But the impact is certainly on the common people.

Why did the Left not form an alliance with the Congress this time?

This is a choice that the Congress made. But the CPI (Marxist) was open to the idea of a larger alliance with the Congress and the Indian Secular Front (ISF).

INBRIEF

Eight killed as vehicle plunges into gorge in Uttarakhand

Eight people were killed when a vehicle carrying them veered off the road and fell into a gorge in Tehri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand on Thursday, the police said. The victims were returning home after attending a cremation when the accident occurred near the Chamba-Koti stretch. Officials said the vehicle had fallen nearly 300 metres into the gorge. Sub-Divisional Magistrate Alkesh Naudiyal said the vehicle had 10 people inside. Eight were killed and two injured. Doctors said the condition of the injured, admitted to the District Hospital in Baurari, was stable. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami expressed sorrow over the incident.

Manipur rights body opposes govt. notification on UAPA

A rights body in Manipur has opposed a government notification implementing Section 43A of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, allowing lower-ranked law enforcement officers to arrest people and search and seize property across the State with immediate effect. In a statement on Thursday, the Youth's Forum for Protection of Human Rights (YFPHR) called for the withdrawal of the "shocking" notification, which permits officers not below the rank of head constable or havildar, in both civil and armed police, to exercise powers on behalf of the designated authority. It said that such powers could be misused, especially during protests.

Cong. attacks govt. over nod for ethanol in aircraft fuel

Party raises safety concern, says ethanol is less energy dense than ATF and cannot produce enough thrust unless more fuel is used, impacting number of passengers that can be carried

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday criticised the government over allegedly permitting use of ethanol in aviation turbine fuel (ATF), calling the move a potential risk to aviation safety though the method in question is different from the blending method used in automobiles, is internationally approved and has already been used on a commercial flight.

On Wednesday, the Petroleum Ministry issued a notification expanding the definition of ATF used in flights to include fuel blended with "synthesised hydrocarbons", effectively opening the door to alternative fuels such as sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

The notification does not grant any specific approval for ethanol use, though ethanol is one of several recognised pathways for producing SAF. Other feedstocks and routes include used cooking oil, animal fats, municipal solid waste, agricultural residues and bio-waste.

This comes after India's plans to have 1% SAF for international flights from 2027 under the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)'s net zero goal for aviation by 2050.

India's plans to have 1% SAF for international flights from 2027 in its efforts towards a net zero goal for aviation. FILE PHOTO

"If they are serious about testing this, let them first use it on [PM] Modi's ₹8,400 crore aircraft or [Nitin] Gadkari's private jet for a couple of years, prove it is safe, and only then consider introducing it to the public," the Congress's Kerala unit posted on X.

Chances of freezing

The Congress claimed that ethanol is less energy dense than ATF and cannot produce enough thrust unless a much higher volume of fuel is used, impacting the number of passengers that can be carried onboard and aircraft efficiency.

It also claimed that since ethanol absorbs moisture, it can freeze at cruising altitudes, where temperatures can fall below -50°C resulting in clogging fuel lines and filters "and potentially cause engine failure mid-air".

The move comes amid growing concerns over the mandated blending of ethanol into gasoline to produce E20 fuel across fuel stations, with users reporting reduced fuel efficiency and a noticeable decline in vehicle performance.

SAF is different

But the process used for gasoline and SAF is fundamentally different.

"The SAF notification employs the term 'synthesised hydrocarbons' instead of ethanol, recognising that aviation fuel compatibility requires chemically processed, drop-in hydrocarbon fuels rather than direct ethanol blending," Indian Sugar & Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association's Director General Deepak Ballani explained.

The use of ethanol in automobiles involves simple blending with petrol (such as E20), where it is burned directly as a fuel.

In contrast, for aviation, ethanol serves only as a feedstock and must undergo complex chemical conversion into jet fuel before it can be used. This also involves dehydration, or removal of water, which also strips out oxygen in the form of H_2O before the fuel can be safely used in aircraft.

BJP govt. failed on fuel and fertilizer security, says Cong.

Kharge accuses the government of failing to diversify imports and avoid shortage

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday said the Narendra Modi government had "failed doubly" in ensuring fuel and fertilizer security, and sought to deflect attention from its shortcomings through "delimitation theatrics".

Taking a swipe at Mr. Modi, Mr. Kharge said he should heed the advice of his party's Margdarshak Mandal member Murli Manohar Joshi who recently said that the rhetoric of India as a "*vishwaguru*" should no longer be invoked.

In a post on X, Mr. Kharge alleged that the government was attempting to divert attention from its "failures" and "serious Epstein file allegations" through delimitation.

"India has seen through the charade. The BJP has scored a double 'F' [fail] in ensuring fuel and fertilizer security for the nation," the Congress chief said.

On fuel security, Mr. Kharge said domestic production had declined while efforts at import diversification had faltered. He alleged that Indian vessels in the Strait of Hormuz were facing difficulties in securing safe passage, with 14 Indian ships stranded for over 50 days.

He said crude oil production had been falling for the 11th consecutive year in 2025-26, declining by nearly 22% since 2014-15. Gas output, he added, had dropped by about 40% over the past decade.

Alleging disruptions in LPG supply, Mr. Kharge said new connections were not being issued and that rural consumers were facing long waiting periods, leading to black marketing.

On fertilizer availability, Mr. Kharge said shortages had been reported across multiple cropping seasons even before recent geopolitical disruptions. He said fertilizer production had fallen to a five-year low in March 2026, registering a 24.6% year-on-year decline.

He flagged restrictions by China on specialised fertilizers and an alleged halt in exports by Russia, accusing the government of failing to diversify imports.

NHRC issues notices as plaint alleges poor adoption of NCERT textbooks

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

Following allegations that private schools continue to prescribe textbooks from private publishers instead of those prescribed by the government, a Bench of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notices to the Centre and States asking if they have conducted any inspection, survey or audits into the issue.

A complaint received by the NHRC had alleged that substitution of textbooks published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) or the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) with private materials translates to exorbitant financial burden on families.

The complaint has sought school-wise audit of book lists for the current academic year.

"The NCERT textbooks are priced minimally by design but private publisher books are sold at much higher prices. This contradicts National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020's explicit vision of making school education equitable, inclusive and affordable for all children," the complaint says.

The complaint further says that the NEP prescribes weight limits for school bags based on class, and mandates that no reference book be carried to school. Prescription of multiple textbooks and workbooks from private publishers violates this norm, it says. It further alleges that the non-compliance of Section 29 under the Right to Education Act has created a two-tier education system – one governed by NCERT curriculum and the other by the commercial interests of private publishers.

The NHRC has issued notices to Chief Secretaries of all States, Administrators of all Union Territories, and the Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Union Education Ministry, seeking an inquiry into concerns highlighted in the complaint and action-taken reports to the commission.

The NHRC further noted that differences in textbooks and curriculum based solely on whether a school is privately or government-run amount to academic discrimination.

The NHRC notice asks "if the State has issued any direction, circular, or government order to District Magistrates (DMs), District Education Officers, Block Education Officers for monitoring private schools' compliance with Section 29 of RTE Act"

It further says, "If no such direction has been issued, an order may be issued to the DMs to ensure that all private schools within the State prescribe only NCERT/SCERT books at the elementary level."

The rights watchdog has also asked for "a school-wise audit of booklists for the current academic year within 30 days" and submission of findings "to the State Education Department for further submission to the Commission".

State support key for tribal welfare, says Social Justice Ministry report

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Support from State governments has been lacking in efforts to extend welfare measures to denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes (DNTs), the Union government has said, adding that even now only seven States are issuing DNT community certificates. In its annual report for 2025-26, the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry said support from States was awaited despite letters and advisories issued for close to a decade.

DNT communities have raised the issue of not getting community certificates, which affects their ability to claim benefits. FILE PHOTO

In the report, the Ministry said that State and Union Territory governments were yet to share lists of eligible DNT beneficiaries awaiting housing allotments under the Centre's PMAY-G. Further, the Ministry said it had requested the States to share other details such as population estimates of DNTs and lists of these communities residing in each State, and had urged them to issue DNT certificates and set up grievance redress mechanisms in letters written since as far back as 2015.

Over the past few years, DNT communities across various parts of the country had repeatedly raised the issue of community certificates not being provided, which, in turn, affected their ability to claim benefits targeted at them.

Nearly 1,200 such communities, which were tagged as "criminal" by the colonial administration, were denotified in 1952 when the Criminal Tribes Act was repealed. Since then, a majority have been classified under the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes or the Other Backward Classes lists, though nearly 300 communities are yet to be classified.

Community leaders have argued that the lack of community certificates and their "misclassification" into SC, ST and OBC lists has further marginalised them within these respective groupings. Sections of DNT communities have taken this argument further to mobilise for a separate classification for DNTs on a par with SC, ST, and OBC classifications.

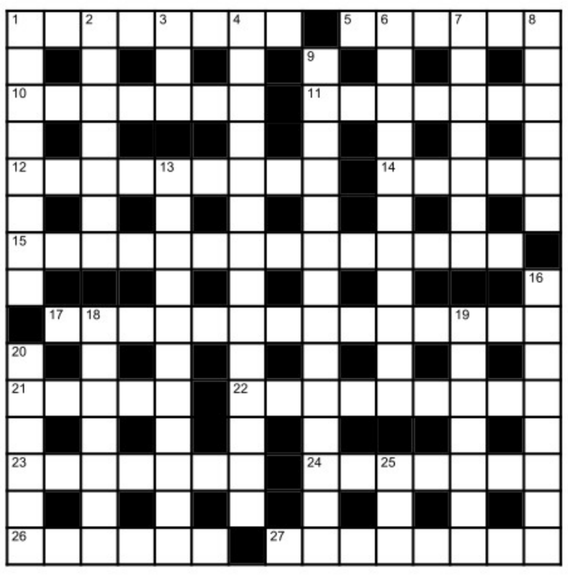
However, even as the Ministry has maintained that there are no proposals under consideration for creating a new classification for DNTs, government officials have said that the ongoing Census 2027 exercise will count the population of these communities during the enumeration phase.

TH CROSSWORD + 14776

(set by Vidwan)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://crossword.thehindu.com*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Firm controlled trade union with bit of engineered isolation (8)
5 Earliest of researches in study of Cancer, say (6)
10 Pashto lord taking fellow to India, occasionally (7)
11 Love piece of crossword clue about German block (7)
12 Bridge looked misaligned optically (5-4)
14 Moves towards new listeners (5)
15 Conspires to use crude things like emeralds and quartzes (8,6)
17 Quietly avoiding entrance to places without right arrangements (14)
21 Non-specific start of viral fever (5)
22 One who can understand dialogues in a muted movie, split head for Spooner (3,6)
23 Atmosphere is bad! It's malice! (7)
24 Resistance to change gets noted, possibly for one resting at tide (7)
26 Set him free of belief in one almighty (6)
27 Small and remote, on English shore, perhaps (3-5)

Down

1 Small freedom, having a view of coast! (8)
2 Quietly going close, screening with perfect hearing organ (7)
3 It can be green or greenish-blue colour mostly! (3)
4 Duty-free loo Sir! Possibly for one who advocates making things oneself! (2-2-10)
6 Field survey about hoax explosive gathers nothing (11)
7 Pick and soften down (7)
8 One from China trading in English dairy product (6)
9 Account of biblical prophet's duties and responsibilities at workplace (3,11)
13 Quiet around his king, child comes back with small starters (5,6)
16 American queen with awfully mean online self-identification (8)
18 Great! I'm playing Jazz! (7)
19 Some cold, sterile, retired fellow (7)
20 Bird with a disheartened voice starting to trill (6)
25 The flawed crypto-currency (3)

SUDOKU

3	4				6			
	5	8					2	
1	9	7						
			6	1			5	
	8		5	7	3		6	
	6			9	8			
						6	3	7
	7					4	8	
			3				1	5

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No.SS6860 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

	V		D		S		I		K		S		A	
S	I	N	E	Q	U	A	N	O	N		P	A	N	E
	R		L		B		S		E		O		T	
A	G	A	I	N	S	T	T	H	E	G	R	A	I	N
	I		R		U		R				T		I	
I	N	L	I	E	R		U	N	B	O	S	O	M	S
	I		U		F		M		A		A		P	
M	A	A	M		A	T	E	I	N		N	E	E	D
	C		T		C		N		O		N		R	
P	R	U	R	I	E	N	T		F	R	O	L	I	C
	E		E				A		F		U		A	
B	E	R	M	U	D	A	T	R	I	A	N	G	L	E
	P		E		E		I		P		C		I	
R	E	I	N		B	I	O	D	I	V	E	R	S	E
	R		S		T		N		E		R		M	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	8	1	9	2	4	5	6	7
6	7	9	5	8	1	4	2	3
5	2	4	3	6	7	9	8	1
4	1	3	2	7	6	8	5	9
8	9	2	1	5	3	6	7	4
7	6	5	8	4	9	3	1	2
9	4	6	7	1	8	2	3	5
1	5	8	4	3	2	7	9	6
2	3	7	6	9	5	1	4	8

FAITH

Azhwars blessed by Rama

In a discourse, Sri Velukkudi Krishnan explained how the Azhwars, the ancient Vaishnavite saints, experienced and celebrated Lord Rama and the Ramayana. Lord Rama is cherished as "Ayodhya Raman" because he lived and moved among the people of Ayodhya along with Sita and was crowned king there, as described by Valmiki in the Ramayana. Rama is celebrated for his kalyana gunas – his auspicious and noble qualities. The Ramayana begins with 16 questions about ideal virtues, and the answer to all of them is Rama himself. All the Azhwars were blessed by Lord Rama, experienced his divine presence, and expressed his grace through their hymns, being deeply drawn to his divine qualities. In sacred spiritual texts (rahasya granthas), almost every core principle or sutra is explained using examples from the Ramayana, which is especially revered for illustrating the practical application of prapatti (surrender). Unlike other avatars, the Azhwars refer to the Rama avatar as "*thaanai*," meaning one who appeared on his own.

Some Azhwars, such as Thirumazhisai Azhwar and Thondaradippodi Azhwar, viewed Rama as the supreme deity (para tattvam), while others focused on him as the sole refuge (rakshakan) and experienced the joy of his beauty and presence (bhogyata), including Periyazhwar and Andal. Although Andal was born for Lord Krishna, she sings in the Tiruppavai about Rama as "*manathukku iniyaan*," the one who is dear to the heart. The Azhwars are more deeply attached to the divine form (rupa) and qualities (gunas) of Rama than to his essential nature (swarupa).

INBRIEF

Rice exports decline 7.5% to $11.53 bn in 2025-26

The country's rice exports dipped 7.5% to $11.53 billion in 2025-26 due to a contraction in shipments to major destinations including West Asian countries, according to Commerce Ministry's data. The exports in March declined 15.36% to $997.53 million. Shipments to West Asian nations, including Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Oman have been impacted due to the war between US.-Israel and Iran. Iran is India's top basmati rice export destination, but the shipments are witnessing growing stress on order flows, payment cycles, and ship schedules due to the prevailing instability. Importers had conveyed their inability to honour existing commitments and remit payments to India, creating uncertainty for exporters. In 2024-25, India exported 20.1 MT of rice valued at $12.5 billion, reaching more than 172 countries. PTI

Nippon Life India unit to settle Yes Bank investment case

Japanese insurer Nippon Life's Indian asset management unit will pay a fine to settle allegations by Indian regulators that the fund fraudulently invested in bonds from lender Yes Bank, according to a document reviewed by *Reuters*. Nippon Life India Asset Management will pay ₹964.6 million ($10.25 million) to settle charges it offered its customers high-risk Yes Bank bonds and in return the lender extended loans to companies backed by the unit's previous owner, industrialist Anil Ambani, according to the letter from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to Nippon India dated April 15. The settlement stipulates 93% of the settlement, or ₹897.4 million, will go to Nippon India's investors that lost money, a rare condition in regulatory settlement offers, which typically require companies to deposit the penalties with the Indian government. REUTERS

Rupee falls 23 paise to cross 94 despite RBI intervention

Central bank action fails to arrest slide as simultaneous rally in crude oil and the U.S. dollar exerts additional downward pressure; stocks fall 1% on profit booking, war-related concerns

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Driven by high hedging dollar demand and a broader shift toward safe-haven assets, the Indian rupee on Thursday weakened past the 94 level against the U.S. dollar.

As crude oil prices rose over $100 a barrel owing to uncertainties around the West Asia conflict, the rupee came under pressure and fell 23 paisa to 94.01 against the dollar from its previous close of 93.78 in the spot market as reflected in the Clearing Corporation of India platform.

This is the rupee's fall for the fourth consecutive session, its longest losing streak, analysts said.

Dilip Parmar, Senior Research Analyst, HDFC Securities said, "Central bank interventions failed to arrest the slide as a simultaneous rally in crude oil and the U.S. dollar exerted additional downward pressure."

Declining trend: This is the rupee's fall for the fourth consecutive session, its longest losing streak. REUTERS

"With excessive speculation in the currency markets curbed by RBI's actions, rupee is likely to move in tandem with fundamentals. The fundamental factor behind rupee's weakness is the rising current account deficit caused by high crude prices and the sustained FPI outflows from India," said V.K. Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Ltd.

"So long as these factors remain the same, rupee will remain weak and if crude price rises again due to escalation of the conflict, rupee will depreciate further," he added.

"The low of ₹93.50 to the dollar reached on March 30 is unlikely to be reached in the near-term since currency speculation is under check. Rupee will move inversely in tune with crude prices. Currently depreciation stands the risk of getting aggravated if FPIs turn big sellers," he further said.

Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst – Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities said, "Uncertainty around U.S.-Iran talks and tensions in the Strait of Hormuz are further supporting crude, adding to inflation concerns and limiting rupee recovery. The dollar remains steady, which is also capping any upside in the rupee."

The equity benchmark indices on Thursday fell about 1% owing to war related worries.

The BSE Sensex fell 852 points, or 1.09%, to 77,664.

The NSE Nifty-50 index, too, fell 205 points or 0.84% to 24,173 points.

FM meets bank heads over AI risks around Anthropic's Mythos

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Nirmala Sitharaman

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday met heads of banks to discuss risks related to Artificial Intelligence (AI) following global concerns over Anthropic's Mythos model threatening data security of financial systems.

The meeting assumes significance in view of development of the Claude Mythos AI model by Anthropic, claiming that it has found vulnerabilities in many major operating systems.

According to sources, risks and measures needed to deal with AI were discussed at the meeting.

The meeting chaired by the Finance Minister deliberated on various risks that AI posed on the financial sector, sources said, adding that banks have been urged to take pre-emptive measures to secure their systems, data and money of customers.

The meeting was attended by top officials of banks, officials from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

According to a senior finance ministry official, the ministry and the RBI are studying the extent of risks that the Indian financial sector faces from this breach.

So far, Indian systems are secure and there is no need for unduly worrying, the official said, adding that the RBI is also doing due-diligence at its end to ensure India's financial sector is secure.

India invites German companies for defence co-development

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has invited German defence companies to co-develop and co-produce advanced military technologies with India, highlighting the need for reliable partnerships in an increasingly uncertain global environment.

Addressing Indian and German industry leaders at the Defence Investor Summit in Munich on Thursday, Mr. Singh stressed that shifting geopolitical alignments, supply chain disruptions, and rapid technological changes made trusted collaborations indispensable.

He urged industries to build partnerships based on shared interests, resilience and mutual trust.

Mr. Singh noted that countries and companies worldwide were reassessing dependencies and diversifying supply chains.

In this context, he positioned India as an attractive partner, citing its expanding market, skilled workforce, stable policy environment, and commitment to the rule of law. These factors, he said, were critical for long-term investments.

Niche areas

Highlighting opportunities under initiatives like *Aatmanirbhar Bharat* and Europe's rearmament push, Mr. Singh said Indian and German firms could collaborate in niche areas such as advanced radar systems, multi-sensor technologies, AI-enabled unmanned aerial systems, sonobuoys, and underwater transmitters. The Defence Minister underlined India's ambition to become a developed nation by 2047 under the leadership of Narendra Modi, supported by strong economic fundamentals and policy clarity.

He described self-reliance not as isolation, but as a collaborative model where India evolved from a buyer to a co-developer and producer of defence technologies.

Mr. Singh also emphasised the role of the defence sector in driving innovation, economic resilience, and strategic autonomy.

Infosys posts 21% jump in Q4 net profit to ₹8,501 crore, to hire 20,000 freshers in FY27

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

Infosys on Thursday reported an almost 21% jump in fourth quarter net profit to ₹8,501 crore from ₹7,033 crore in the year-earlier period. In Q4, the company reported a revenue of ₹46,402 crore, a 13.4% growth from ₹40,925 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. For the full year, the company reported revenue of ₹1,78,650 crore, a 9.6% YoY growth, over last year's ₹1,62,990 crore. The company's FY26 net profit stood at ₹29,440 crore, a 10.2% increase over ₹26,713 crore in the same quarter a year earlier. During FY26, Infosys reported large deal wins worth $14.9 billion, a net new of 55%, while Q4 saw large deals at $3.2 billion. "We delivered a resilient performance in FY26 with growth of 3.1% with strong large deal wins of $14.9 billion, reflecting the robustness of our enterprise AI value proposition and market share gains in large transformation opportunities," said CEO and MD Salil Parekh.

Salil Parekh

He further said that the simplicity and strength of the company's AI services strategy across six areas was gaining traction in the market. "Everything we do now has AI in it, as an augmenting factor," he said at a press conference.

For FY27, Infosys guided a revenue growth of 1.5-3.5% in constant currency and operating margin in the 20-22% range. The company said it hired over 20,000 freshers during FY26 and has plans to hire another 20,000 freshers in the current fiscal as well.

HSBC downgrades India to 'underweight'

Reuters

HSBC downgraded Indian equities to "underweight" from "neutral", its second cut in less than a month, as it expects surging energy prices triggered by the West Asia conflict to threaten the durability of the country's earnings recovery.

"India now looks less attractive than North East Asian peers in the current macro setting," HSBC said in a note on Thursday, with the benchmark Nifty 50 and Sensex falling 6.7% and 7.9% so far this year, among the worst performing markets globally.

HSBC expects oil and gas markets to remain tight through most of the June and September quarters.

'Amid geopolitical tensions, India has strong advantages in aviation'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A key priority ahead is to reduce dependence on foreign hubs for international traffic

The ongoing geopolitical developments have highlighted the aviation sector's vulnerability, impacting routes, costs, and operational efficiency.

In this context, India has a strong advantage with rising demand, expanding infrastructure, and clear vision to scale to about 350 airports by 2047, said Sharad Kumar, Chief Advisor, Airports Authority of India (AAI).

"Initiatives such as UDAN have strengthened regional connectivity, and the next phase will focus on long-term viability, efficiency, and network integration," he said, while speaking at the Airport360 Expo 2026 organised by Media Fusion in Mumbai.

A key priority ahead is to reduce dependence on foreign hubs for international traffic and capture greater value across airlines, MRO, cargo, and airport-led services, he said.

"Strengthening hub infrastructure, enabling policy frameworks, and leveraging technology will be critical to positioning India as a global aviation hub. Platforms like Airport360 Expo play an important role in enabling alignment and driving execution across the ecosystem," he added.

Sharing his perspective on the scale of opportunity and the infrastructure priorities shaping India's aviation growth, Capt. B. V. J. K. Sharma, CEO, Navi Mumbai International Airport, said, "India is already among the top three domestic aviation markets globally, with passenger traffic reaching around 412 million in 2025, reflecting strong growth momentum." "The sector is expected to handle close to 500 million passengers before 2030 and move towards 1 billion by 2047, supported by sustained demand and fleet expansion, with over 1,000 aircraft orders in place," he said. Infrastructure expansion is progressing at pace, with over 160 operational airports and continued investments under National programmes, he said.

Talking about the Navi Mumbai International Airport, he said its capacity is being developed in phases to reach 90 million passengers by 2032, supported by strong connectivity and integrated planning.

RAMALLAH

Palestinian Authority says Israeli fire kills 15-year-old in West Bank

AFP

Israeli troops killed a 15-year-old boy during a raid in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus on Thursday, the Palestinian Authority's Health Ministry said. Israeli troops or settlers have killed at least 1,066 Palestinians — many of them militants, but also scores of civilians — in the region since the start of war in Gaza in 2023. AFP

SEOUL

North Korea, Russia aim to open new bridge linking two countries

AFP

North Korea and Russia aim to open a road bridge connecting the countries across the Tumen River as soon as possible, North Korean state media KCNA said on Thursday, as the two countries forge closer ties. The project will boost bilateral cooperation including tourism, trade and the movement of people, KCNA said. REUTERS

PARIS

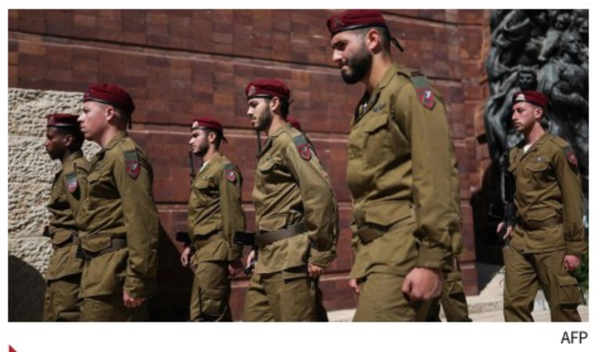
U.K., France to sign border deal to curb small-boat migrant crossings

REUTERS

Britain and France are set to unveil a three-year multimillion-euro agreement on Thursday aimed at reducing the number of migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, with more patrols and enhanced surveillance in northern France. The new deal builds on the Sandhurst Treaty, first signed in 2018 and renewed in 2023. AP

JERUSALEM

Israel awaiting U.S. green light to 'return Iran to Stone Age': Minister



AFP

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz said on Thursday that Israel was "prepared to resume the war against Iran", adding that his country was awaiting a green light from the United States to return Iran to "the Stone Age". "The IDF is ready both defensively and offensively, and the targets have been marked," Mr. Katz said. AFP

Russia reports toxic rain as oil depot hit in Ukraine strike

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Russia was struggling to extinguish a fire raging at a Black Sea oil terminal hit by Ukraine earlier this week, local authorities said on Thursday, after urging residents to stay home amid harmful toxic emissions.

Kyiv struck oil facilities in the southern town of Tuapse on Monday, triggering a huge blaze and sending plumes of thick black smoke into the sky over the coastal city.

"The fire at the Tuapse oil refinery is still ongoing... four storage tanks are ablaze," the regional emergency headquarters said on Thursday, four days after the hit.

The fire caused toxic rainfall on Wednesday, with authorities saying the concentration of toxic particles in the air was "two to three times permissible levels".

The rain left "a black coating on surfaces," authorities said.

City officials on Wednesday warned residents to close windows, limit outdoor activities and wear face masks if they need to go outside.

Lebanon, Israel to resume rare direct talks in Washington to extend truce

Lebanon President says contacts are ongoing to extend the 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah; the objective of future talks is to seek withdrawal of Israeli troops from the country and begin reconstruction process, his office says

Associated Press
BEIRUT

U.S. President Donald Trump will greet Lebanese and Israeli envoys at the White House on Thursday as they meet for a second round of U.S.-facilitated talks, with Beirut seeking to extend a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, a day after Israeli strikes killed at least five people including a journalist.

Fallen voice: Mourners hold images depicting Lebanese journalist Amal Khalil, who was killed in an Israeli strike. REUTERS

The meeting between Lebanese Ambassador to the U.S. Nada Hamadeh Moawad and her Israeli counterpart Yechiel Leiter is the second between the two diplomats, days after they held the first such direct talks between the two countries in three decades. Lebanon President Joseph Aoun said on Wednesday that contacts are ongoing to extend the 10-day ceasefire that went into effect on Friday.

Ms. Hamadeh will put forward an extension of the ceasefire during the meeting and ask for an end to ongoing Israeli home demolitions in villages and towns occupied by Israel after the latest war broke out on March 2, Mr. Aoun said in comments released by his office.

Preparations are ongoing for wider-reaching negotiations.

The aim of the future talks is to "fully" stop Israeli attacks, withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, release of Lebanese prisoners held in Israel, deployment of Lebanese troops along the border and beginning the reconstruction process, Mr. Aoun said.

Journalist killed

Lebanon's leaders accused Israel on Thursday of committing a war crime, after an airstrike killed a Lebanese journalist in the country's south, with the Israeli Army saying it was reviewing the incident. Rescuers and the reporter's employer on Wednesday confirmed the death of Amal Khalil, a 42-year-old journalist who worked for the Lebanese daily *Al-Akhbar*.

Prime Minister Nawaf Salam wrote on X that "targeting journalists and obstructing access for rescue teams constitutes a war crime".

A 10-day ceasefire has been in effect in Lebanon since Friday, pausing the war between Israel and the Iran-backed militant group that has left more than 2,400 dead in Lebanon.

(With inputs from AFP, Reuters)

Pentagon says top Navy official to leave office 'immediately'

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

U.S. Navy Secretary John Phelan is leaving his job, the Pentagon abruptly announced on Wednesday, the first head of a military service to depart during President Donald Trump's second term but just the latest top defence leader to step down or be ousted.

No reason was given for the unexpected departure of the Navy's top civilian official, coming as the sea service has imposed a blockade of Iranian ports.

Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said in a post on X that Mr. Phelan was "departing the administration, effective immediately."

Another Trump loyalist is taking over as acting head of the Navy: Undersecretary Hung Cao, a 25-year Navy combat veteran who ran unsuccessful campaigns for the U.S. Senate and House in Virginia.

Mr. Phelan's departure is the latest in a series of shake-ups of top leadership at the Pentagon, coming just weeks after Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth fired the Army's top uniformed officer, General Randy George.

Mr. Phelan is leaving during a busy time for the Navy.

It has three aircraft carriers deployed in or heading to West Asia, while the Trump administration says all the armed forces are poised to resume combat operations against Iran should the ceasefire expire.

10 people killed in attack at mining facility in Pakistan's Balochistan

Agence France-Presse
QUETTA

A group of militants killed at least 10 people, including a Turkish national, at a copper and gold mining project in Pakistan's Balochistan province, officials said on Thursday.

About 40 militants on motorcycles and other vehicles stormed the mining project site of Pakistani company National Resources Private Limited in the Darigwan area of Chagai district on Wednesday.

"At least 10 people were killed in the incident, including a Turkish national, six workers, and three guards," a local administration official said.

No group claimed responsibility, but ethnic separatists have intensified their attacks in the region in recent years, including on mining projects.

Baloch separatists accuse Pakistan's government of exploiting the province's natural gas and abundant mineral resources without benefiting the local population.

The Turk and three guards were killed when a fuel tanker at the mine exploded during the attack, the official said.

Another Turk abducted

"The militants also abducted one Turkish national during the attack," he said.

A police official said eight people were wounded.

The company acknowledged the attack late on Wednesday, saying security forces responded "promptly and have secured the area".

China selects two Pakistani candidates as its first foreign astronauts: reports

Vasudevan Mukunth

China announced on April 22 that it had selected Muhammad Zeeshan Ali and Khurram Daud of Pakistan to be its first batch of foreign astronauts.

The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said in a statement that the two men will come to China as reserve astronauts for training, *Global Times* and *Xinhua* reported. After completing all training and evaluation, one of them will participate in a mission to Tiangong, the Chinese space station, as a payload specialist.

The reports also said Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) had confirmed that Mr. Ali and Mr. Daud had cleared the checking process and were departing for China.

The mission is expected to happen later this year. The selected astronaut will conduct scientific experiments in microgravity covering fields including materials science, fluid physics, life sciences, and biotechnology, according to the reports.

Pakistan now stands to be the first country to place a citizen onboard Tiangong as a crew participant. For decades now, China has been Pakistan's primary partner in defence procurement, infrastructure, and satellite technology more recently.

To the stars: Khurram Daud (left) and Muhammad Zeeshan Ali.
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, GOVT. OF PAKISTAN/FACEBOOK

Pakistan placed a remote sensing satellite in orbit in July 2025 launched from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in China.

Excluded by the U.S.

China initially sought to take part in the International Space Station (ISS) programme but was denied participation. The U.S. entrenched the exclusion in 2011 with its Wolf Amendment, a law prohibiting NASA from engaging with the Chinese space programme.

Having been shut out of the ISS for more than two decades on the grounds that its space programme was too intertwined with the military to be trusted, China is now extending Tiangong to those partners that western or west-led coalitions have historically excluded as well.

In 2019, China collaborated with the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs to open Tiangong to scientific projects from other countries, selecting research projects from Switzerland, Poland, Germany, Italy, and 13 other countries.

Tiangong is one of only two currently operational space stations. It hosts a crew of three astronauts – six during handovers – and has undertaken more than 260 scientific and applied research projects.

The station became fully operational in late 2022.

Europe was briefly a candidate for the first foreign crew on Tiangong. The European Space Agency (ESA) and China signed an agreement in 2015 to boost collaboration, with the stated goal of flying European astronauts to the Chinese space station.

Those plans unravelled, however, with the ESA saying they had neither the budgetary capacity nor the political intention to send its astronauts to Tiangong.

China has undertaken regular crew rotations to Tiangong. The programme is also (currently) planning to launch the Xuntian space telescope module, which will orbit independently but is capable of docking with Tiangong, in late 2026. There are also plans to expand Tiangong itself to six modules, possibly from 2027.

This schedule has spurred the U.S. government to redouble its commitment to the NASA Artemis programme, which plans to land American astronauts on the moon by 2028, to 'beat' China.

Pakistan's space capabilities have historically been far behind those of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which has landed a probe on the moon's south pole region and is preparing to send its first crew into orbit as part of the 'Gaganyaan' programme.

A Pakistani astronaut in orbit ahead of an Indian one as part of 'Gaganyaan' is at minimum a reversal of the usual regional optics.

Office Of The Municipal Board Malpura
District Tonk (Raj.)
Sr. No. : NPM/2026-27/289 Date :- 13/04/2026
Notice Inviting Bid
Nagar Palika Malpura Bids For 03/2026-27 NIB No. DLB2627A0500 of subject matters of procurement are invited from interested bidders Last Submission End Date 05/05/2026. Other Particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal **www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in & www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.**
Executive Officer
Raj.Samwad/C/26/1396 Municipal Board Malpura

राजस्थान सरकार
कार्यालय निदेशक, पुरातत्त्व एवं संग्रहालय विभाग, राजस्थान, जयपुर
(दूरभाष नं. 0141-2820360, email-dirarch@rajasthan.gov.in)
क्रमांकः पु.सं./ स्मा./ तक./ चांदपोल गेट पार्किंग/ 2025/ 8381 दिनांक : 16/4/26
ई-बिड सूचना
चांदपोल गेट एवं हाथी स्टेण्ड, आमेर महल परिसर में पार्किंग स्थल के लिए 03 वर्ष हेतु पार्किंग ठेका कार्य हेतु अनुभवी फर्मों से ऑनलाईन बिड दो अलग-अलग प्रस्तावों में (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय प्रस्ताव के रूप में) आमंत्रित की जाती है। बोली का विवरण http://museumsrajasthan.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in and http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।
Bid UBN No. (1) AMD2627SLOB00021
DIPR/C/7154/26 निदेशक

अजमेर विकास प्राधिकरण, अजमेर
टोडरमल लेन, सिविल लाईन्स, अजमेर, Email :- ajmerada@gmail.com,
Website :- www.rajasthan.gov.in/ada, Tel.No. :- 0145-2627748-2627749
क्रमांक :- अविप्रा/प.2/तकनीकी/2026-27/राजकाज 21674571 दिनांक :- 22/04/2026
E-TENDER - 02/2026-27
Bids for Recarpeting of Road & Construction of Divider from Court Chouraha to CRPF Bridge, Ajmer amounting Rs. 225.30 Lacs are invited from interested bidders for upto 11.05.2026, 6:00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on procurement portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in & http://sppp.raj.nic.in** **http://www.urban.rajasthan.gov.in/ada** departmental website.
UBN : AJD2627WSOB00006
Raj.Samwad/C/26/1317 Executive Engineer

Central University of Himachal Pradesh
(Established under Central Universities Act, 2009)
Employment Notice No. 001/2026,
Dated 27.03.2026 for TEACHING POSITIONS
Central University of Himachal Pradesh invites online applications from eligible candidates for various teaching positions to be filled on regular basis / against lien vacancy. The Candidates may apply online. **Last Date 27.04.2026.** For further details please visit University Website i.e., **www.cuhimachal.ac.in**
REGISTRAR

APPOINTMENT

CoEET **CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR ENERGY TRANSITION (CoEET), A.P.**
APEPDCL Training Centre, Sagar Nagar, Visakhapatnam - 530045.
Society Reg. No. 618 of 2025 Under Andhra Pradesh Societies Registration Act, 2001.
NOTIFICATION
Applications are invited from eligible candidates for filling up of the post of 1 No. Centre Head - CoEET on Fixed Term Basis in CoEET. The Job Description and other details may be downloaded from Website **https://coeet.ap.gov.in, www.apeasternpower.com**
Place: Visakhapatnam Sd/- VICE CHAIRMAN
Date: 24.04.2026 CoEET

ಭಾರತೀಯ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ
भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DHARWAD
IITDH/IPS/Phase-B/2026-27/001
A Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for the appointment of a domestic architectural consultant has been issued by IIT Dharwad and published on the Central Public Procurement Portal (CPPP) on 20 April 2026, bearing Tender ID: 2026_IITDW_905909, for phase B of IIT Dharwad.
For Terms & Conditions and Tender Document please visit:
https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app / https://www.iitdh.ac.in/tenders

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR
No. : NIT/2026-27/919 - 32 Date : 22/04/2026
निविदा सूचना/2026-27
निम्नलिखित कार्य के लिए केन्द्र / राज्य सरकार के अभियांत्रिकी विभागों एवं उनके अधिकृत संगठनों में पंजीकृत एवं अनुभवी संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है

कार्य का विवरण	कार्य की कुल अनुमानित लागत(रु.)	निविदा सूचना संख्या
SITC of Various Electrical work in Auditorium at University of Kota. UBN: RRC2627WLOB00054	550.64 Lakh	ई-037/26-27
Construction of Regional office & Laboratory Building for Pollution Control Board at Banswara. UBN: RRC2627WSOB00050	286.92 Lakh	ई-038/26-27
Misc. Retrofitting work of High and Medium Lavel of Criticality at RHC Building, Jodhpur. UBN: RRC2627WSOB00056	265.45 Lakh	अल्पकालीन ई-041/26-27

निविदा से सम्बन्धित प्रपत्र में निविदा शुल्क, धरोहर राशि, डाउनलोड करने व खोलने की तारीख सहित सम्पूर्ण विवरण एवं संशोधन वेबसाईट **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.nic.in** तथा **http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in/rsrdc** पर देखा जा सकता है। इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाईट **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** पर रजिस्टर्ड करवाना आवश्यक है.
महाप्रबंधक

U.T. OF LAKSHADWEEP
LAKSHADWEEP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVT. OF INDIA UNDERTAKING)
56/2366 (Old No. 27/1038 B), Panampilly Nagar, Kochi - 682 036
Tel No. 0484 2323448 / 2323458
E-Mail: ldcladm2016@gmail.com Website: lakshadweep.gov.in
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE
Lakshadweep Development Corporation Ltd. is inviting applications for 2 (two) posts of **Marine Superintendent on Deputation basis from Central / State Governments and PSUs** failing which on Contract basis, from eligible candidates with Class I Marine Engineer Officer (MEO) having worked as Chief Engineer in coastal / foreign going vessels for at least one year.
Application with self attested copies of all certificates should reach the above address on or before 15.05.2026. Preference will be given to eligible and qualified candidates from Lakshadweep.
Please visit our Website: **lakshadweep.gov.in** for details.
23.04.2026 Sd/- General Manager

BE PRACTICAL

We instil in players the need to remain balanced, says Solanki

K. MURALI KUMAR

You've got a limited opportunity to get people up and running. They are top-performing athletes and understand the rigours of elite-level sport. You can't get too high when you've won. You can't get too low when you've lost. You have to remain balanced and that's what we instil in these players – GT's Vikram Solanki.

BIG INFLUENCE

'Everything Bethell is experiencing in the IPL is going to help him'

K. MURALI KUMAR

Jacob [Bethell] himself has talked about how much he's got out of just being at the IPL. When he had that innings in the T20 World Cup semifinal (48-ball 105 vs. India), he pretty much referenced that. So everything he's experiencing here in the IPL is going to help him as an England cricketer — RCB's Mo Bobat on Bethell.

PENALTY

Burger slapped with fine for breaching IPL Code of Conduct

FILE PHOTO: ANI

Rajasthan Royals pacer Nandre Burger has been fined 10% of his match fee for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during the match against Lucknow Super Giants on Wednesday. He was also handed a demerit point. For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the match referee's decision is final and binding.

BOOST FOR CAPITALS

Starc set to join DC squad today; Rehan comes in for Duckett

FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

Mitchell Starc will join the Delhi Capitals camp on Friday. The star Australian pacer had missed the initial stages of IPL 2026 due to a shoulder and elbow injury. It remains to be seen how soon Starc can return to action. Meanwhile, Capitals have signed spin-bowling all-rounder Rehan Ahmed as a replacement for Ben Duckett.

Samson, Akeal the heroes as CSK decimates MI at the Wankhede

The opener smashes his second hundred of the season to power the visitor to 207 for six after being put in; the left-arm spinner scalps four while Noor claims a couple as the home side suffers its biggest loss by runs in the tournament's history

IPL-19

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Sanju Samson laid the foundation by bettering his T20 World Cup semifinal heroics at the Wankhede Stadium with his second hundred of IPL 2026. And Akeal Hosein's sensational spell sealed the deal as the marquee clash between Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings turned into a cakewalk for the visitor here on Thursday.

Samson's fifth IPL hundred, coupled with Akeal producing arguably the spell of the season, left MI on the mat as CSK registered a thumping 103-run win. After posting 207 for six, CSK bundled MI out for 104 in 19 overs with little fuss, the chase never quite taking off.

Impact Player Akeal, drafted in for his new-ball utility, struck immediately. His first over saw MI's Impact Player Danish Malewar edge one behind the stumps. Soon after, Quinton de Kock played on off Mukesh Choudhary – the pacer gesturing to the heavens in tribute to his mother, who passed away earlier in the week. In his next over, Akeal spun one in from leg stump to castle Naman Dhir. At 11 for three, MI was already on the ropes.

The Wankhede, packed and loud, found itself outnumbered and outvoiced by a sea of yellow. The onus fell on Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma, but Akeal returned to break that resistance, sneaking one through Tilak's defence.

Alongside Noor Ahmad, he triggered a collapse – four wickets for three runs off nine balls – as MI slipped from 84 for three to 87 for seven. Shardul Thakur, on as a concussion substitute for Mitchell Santner, merely delayed the inevitable.

Earlier, Samson (101 n.o., 54b, 10x4, 6x6) ensured that CSK had a big total to defend. Ruturaj Gaikwad started briskly before falling to A.M. Ghazanfar while Shivam Dube struggled for timing. The rest of the top-order maintained strike rates above 150.

Samson, watchful early, opened up with precision later. On 85 at the start of the final over, he muscled one over deep midwicket off Krish Bhagat, then, after two dots, carved a wide ball over covers.

Farming strike, he finished with a pull over square leg for a one-bounce four – a flourish that helped him celebrate the milestone in style and push MI on the back foot.

Madhwal for Mhatre

CSK has signed Akash Madhwal as a replacement for Ayush Mhatre, who has been ruled out of the tournament due to injury.

Game-changers: Samson's ton took CSK past the 200-run mark before Noor and Akeal spun a web around the MI batters. EMMANUAL YOGINI

SCOREBOARD

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Sanju Samson (not out) 101 *(54b, 10x4, 6x6)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad c Tilak b Ghazanfar 22 *(14b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Sarfaraz Khan b Santner 14 *(8b, 3x4)*, Shivam Dube b Ghazanfar 5 *(8b)*, Dewald Brevis c Bumrah b Ashwani 21 *(11b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Kartik Sharma c Santner b Bumrah 18 *(19b, 2x6)*, Jamie Overton c Naman b Ashwani 15 *(7b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Akeal Hosein **(Impact Player for Kartik)** (not out) 2 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-3, w-5): 9; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 207.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-32 (Ruturaj, 2.6 overs), 2-72 (Sarfaraz, 5.4), 3-91 (Dube, 8.1), 4-122 (Brevis, 10.6), 5-165 (Kartik, 16.5), 6-181 (Overton, 17.6).

MUMBAI INDIANS BOWLING
Bumrah 4-0-31-1, Hardik 2-0-38-0, Ghazanfar 4-0-25-2, Santner 4-0-44-1, Ashwani 4-0-37-2, Krish 2-0-31-0.

MUMBAI INDIANS
Quinton de Kock b Mukesh 7 *(10b, 1x6)*, Danish Malewar **(Impact Player for Ghazanfar)** c Samson b Akeal 0 *(1b)*, Naman Dhir b Akeal 0 *(3b)*, Suryakumar Yadav c Sarfaraz b Akeal 35 *(30b, 5x4)*, Tilak Varma b Akeal 37 *(29b, 5x4)*, Hardik Pandya c Mukesh b Noor 1 *(2b)*, Sherfane Rutherford c Kamboj b Noor 0 *(1b)*, Shardul Thakur *(Concussion Substitute)* c Brevis b Kamboj 6 *(12b)*, Krish Bhagat c Gurjapneet b Overton 7 *(15b)*, Ashwani Kumar (not out) 1 *(6b)*, Jasprit Bumrah c Samson b Gurjapneet 2 *(5b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-6): 8; Total (in 19 overs): 104.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-7 (Malewar, 0.6), 2-7 (de Kock, 1.5), 3-11 (Naman, 2.3), 4-84 (Tilak, 11.5), 5-85 (Hardik, 12.1), 6-85 (Rutherford, 12.2), 7-87 (Suryakumar, 13.1), 8-100 (Krish, 16.6), 9-100 (Shardul, 17.1).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Akeal 4-1-17-4, Mukesh 4-0-31-1, Kamboj 3-0-10-1, Noor 4-0-23-2, Overton 2-0-14-1, Gurjapneet 2-0-7-1.

Toss: Mumbai Indians.
Player-of-the-Match: Samson.
Chennai Super Kings won by 103 runs.

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Punjab Kings	6	5	0	1	11	1.420
Rajasthan Royals	7	5	2	0	10	0.790
Royal Challengers	6	4	2	0	8	1.171
Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	4	3	0	8	0.820
Chennai Super Kings	7	3	4	0	6	0.118
Delhi Capitals	6	3	3	0	6	-0.130
Gujarat Titans	6	3	3	0	6	-0.821
Mumbai Indians	7	2	5	0	4	-0.736
Lucknow Super Giants	7	2	5	0	4	-1.277
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	1	5	1	3	-0.879

Next assignment

CSK: April 26 vs. **GT**
Chennai, 3.30 p.m.

MI: April 29 vs. **SRH**
Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

Stern test awaits Titans against a well-rounded Royal Challengers

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

In a way, Gujarat Titans is a throwback to the Royal Challengers Bengaluru of yesteryear.

Back then, Virat Kohli, A.B. de Villiers and Chris Gayle used to do the bulk of the scoring and the rest of the batting line-up would be comparatively airy.

GT of today is eerily similar, with the troika of Shubman Gill, B. Sai Sudharsan and Jos Buttler expected to do all the heavy-lifting.

On Friday at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here, GT's biggest test against an RCB outfit that operates at full throttle from ball one will be to prove that its methods – even if they seem anachronistic – are effective enough.

No change in tactics

"I don't think we'll suddenly change," said Vikram Solanki, GT's director of cricket, on match-eve.

"We'll remain consistent in the way we go about our cricket altogether. We trust in a method and formula, and we trust the players that have delivered."

Just that, in the most recent match, the players didn't. GT lost by a crushing 99 runs to Mumbai Indians, a defeat Solanki attributed to "a number of errors".

It is imperative that the middle- and lower-orders contribute, especially Rahul Tewatia and M. Shahrukh Khan who have totalled 84 runs in 10 combined visits to the crease.

RCB too is coming in following a defeat – to Delhi Capitals at home by six wickets. But that reverse was only its second this season from six matches, and it boasts of such a well-set team that even a generational talent like England's Jacob Bethell has had to warm the bench.

Friday will be the last time RCB will play a league stage match in the Garden City this campaign, and there will be significant attention on a pitch which has not aided free-flowing strokeplay from the get-go. The city is also in the midst of a searing summer, but the RCB faithful will want nothing more than a rain of runs.

Key player: Gill would have to lead Titans' charge to counter a RCB side that has been operating at full throttle. K. MURALI KUMAR

Today's match

RCB vs. GUJARAT TITANS

Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 6
RCB 3 | GT 3

PREVIOUS MEETING
GT won by eight wickets, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Depth of domestic talent in India has improved: David

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Not many batters are synonymous with the way the art of willow-wielding has exploded this IPL quite like Tim David.

The broad-chested Aussie of gigantic frame (6'5") has been one of the best exponents of power-hitting, scoring his 173 runs this campaign at a whopping strike-rate of 203.52. He also has more sixes than fours (14 to 12), in line with his overall IPL career (74 to 66).

But the 30-year-old, who recently became the second fastest to score 1000 IPL runs (560 balls), also felt that the Indian domestic talent has stepped up dramatically to become bold and belligerent.

"The first part is that you have the Impact subs... you get an extra player," said David in the lead-up to Friday's match against Gujarat Titans here. It is also that the depth of the domestic talent in India has improved so much and these guys come into the IPL ready to hit sixes.

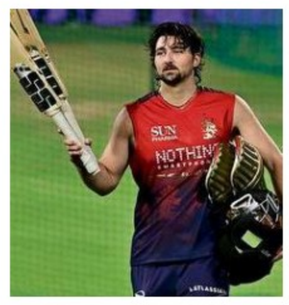
"Earlier, you would need specific overseas players to be power-hitters, like Chris Gayle. But you now look at all the Indian domestic players and the international Indian players, and they all hit sixes. That's stepped up throughout the competition."

However, despite totals routinely going north of 200, David opined – without saying in as many words – that it was still a cat-and-mouse contest between batters and bowlers.

"Bowlers have lots of weapons in their arsenal now and are definitely a lot smarter.

"You'll see the summary on the TV, they talk about where the bowlers can target and they've obviously graphed out where batters score quickly and what they're weak against.

"If the bowler lands a perfect yorker, it's going to be difficult to score off. But they know that if I'm standing down and they're going to miss, I'm going to try and hit them for a six".



David. K. MURALI KUMAR

Wolvaardt powers SA to series win against India

Press Trust of India
JOHANNESBURG

India scored its highest-ever total against South Africa but still suffered a nine-wicket reverse at the hands of the home team with skipper Laura Wolvaardt leading the way with a splendid ton in the third women's T20 International on Wednesday.

South Africa took an unassailable 3-0 lead to clinch the five-match series.

The scores: India 192/4 in 20 overs (Shafali 64, Harmanpreet 66) lost to South Africa 193/1 in 16.3 overs (Wolvaardt 115, Luus 64 n.o.). **Toss**: South Africa. **PoM**: Wolvaardt.

Wolvaardt. X@PROTEASWOMENCSA

Praful's remarkable rise and India ambitions

Praful. NAGARA GOPAL.

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

Every pacer dreams of scooping up a wicket in the first over he bowls. Few get to do it. Fewer get to do it thrice, and that too on the biggest stage – the IPL.

Vidarbha quick Praful Hinge had a debut to savour, the Sunrisers Hyderabad bowler dismissing Rajasthan Royals' three top-order batters in his opening over.

"I played an under-23 game with Vaibhav Suryavanshi," revealed Praful in an interaction facilitated by JioHotstar.

"I had got him out with a bouncer then. I decided to bowl the same ball and knew he would go for it as he was hitting everyone right from the first ball." And the 15-year-old took the bait.

Praful relies on a tried and tested red-ball approach to succeed in the fast-paced life of T20s. "With the new ball, we should test the batters as much as possible. We play red-ball cricket with patience and need to follow that successfully."

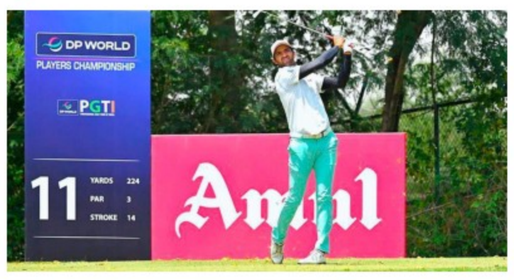
He credits his work ethic to his father, Prakash, an employee of the Maharashtra State Electricity Board in Nagpur.

"From the age of 12, I trained with my father. He would get tired, but I'd still want to keep going. At that time, all I knew was that I wanted to play for India. I didn't know about domestic or club cricket."

Praful climbed the ladder of age-group cricket, played in Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, and grabbed Sunrisers' attention. That helped him link up with Pat Cummins, his idol.

Cummins had a simple message for Praful. "During training sessions, he would say, 'do whatever you're doing with your heart. Everyone knows T20 is a batsman's game. Enjoy the game, smile and win.'"

INBRIEF



Dhruv Sheoran opens up a three-shot lead

Dhruv Sheoran fired a six-under 66 to open up a three-shot lead at 15-under 201 after the third round of the DP World Players Championship at Nuh, Haryana. The 31-year-old delivered a second consecutive 66. Sunit Chowrasia (70, 66, 68), who returned from a long injury lay-off earlier this year, climbed to second at 12-under 204 after a steady four-under 68 that had five birdies and a lone bogey. Akshay Sharma (70, 65, 70) and Jamal Hossain (67, 70, 68) are tied third at 11-under 205.

Shanto, Mustafizur star in Bangladesh's series triumph

Najmul Hossain Shanto's century and Mustafizur Rahman's five-wicket haul helped Bangladesh thrash New Zealand by 55 runs in the third ODI and clinch the series 2-1 at Chattogram on Thursday. The 2-1 triumph marked Bangladesh's third straight series victory in the 50-over format following wins over the West Indies and Pakistan.

The scores: Bangladesh 265/8 in 50 overs (Najmul Hossain Shanto 105, Liton Das 76) bt New Zealand 210 in 44.5 overs (Nick Kelly 59, Dean Foxcroft 75, Mustafizur Rahman 5/43). **Toss:** NZ; **PoM:** Shanto; **PoS:** Nahid Rana.

Priyanuj, Ritvik emerge u-19, u-17 Natl. TT champions

Assam's Priyanuj Bhattacharya staged a remarkable comeback to defeat Tamil Nadu's P.B. Abhinand 4-2 in the under-19 boys' singles final at the junior and youth National table tennis championships here on Thursday.

The results (final): Boys: U-19: Priyanuj Bhattacharya (Asm) bt P. B. Abhinand (TN) 4-2 (8-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-4, 11-8, 11-8). **Doubles:** Abhinand and M.R. Balamurugan (TN) bt Senthil Kumar Mehan and Umesh Kumar (TN) 3-1 (11-6, 8-11, 11-4, 11-5).

U-17: Ritvik Gupta (J&K) bt Sarthak Arya (Odi) 4-3 (11-8, 5-11, 9-11, 11-8, 6-11, 11-8, 11-7). **Doubles:** Sahil Rawat & Dhairya Rawat (PSPBA) bt Trishal Raj Kumar & Rushikesh Jagtap (PSPBA) 3-2 (11-8, 8-11, 5-11, 11-8, 11-7).

Yamal out for rest of season but may be fit for World Cup

Lamine Yamal will miss the rest of Barcelona's season but should be healed from a leg injury in time to play for Spain at the World Cup, the club said on Thursday. Barcelona said 18-year-old Yamal will miss the remaining six LaLiga games for the leader as he follows "conservative treatment" to heal a muscle injury in his left leg that he picked up on Wednesday while converting a penalty.

Pass FC Sparks blanks Technico FF

Pass FC Sparks blanked Technico FF 4-0 in the KSFA 'A' division women's football league in Bengaluru on Thursday. Andrea Elizabeth scored in the fifth, 21st and 44th minutes while D. Pooja got one in the 64th.

LIVE TELECAST

Golf: China Open, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 10 a.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 & 7.30 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 12 a.m. (Saturday)
LaLiga: FanCode, 12.30 a.m. (Saturday)

Wu, Ham gain two-stroke lead on the opening day

Bhullar best among Indians in the first round at the Sentosa Golf Club; Shiv delivers a stunning hole-in-one on par-three hole two, but eventually stands at T-117; Karandeep and Jeev disappoint

SINGAPORE OPEN

S. Shrivathsan
SINGAPORE

Thailand's Ekpharit Wu and Jeongwoo Ham of South Korea were the early pacesetters, while Gaganjeet Bhullar was the best-performing Indian in the Singapore Open first round at the Sentosa Golf Club here on Thursday.

Wu and Ham earned a two-stroke lead with impressive performances of seven-under-64. Wu, starting from tee 10, produced five birdies on his front nine to be quick off the blocks, with Ham matching him despite a bogey on hole 10. "Having my wife (his caddie) by my side makes me more confident. It has been a rewarding partnership," said Wu.

Bhullar, part of the chasing pack, was tied sixth after carding four-under-67 in a bogey-free effort. The 37-year-old, who began from tee 10, rode on three birdies on his back nine – holes one, four and seven – to be among a seven-member club at T-6.

"Given that I had four birdies and 14 pars, it was a consistent round of golf. I was in the game through the 18 holes. I would love to continue the form and multiply my belief in the next three rounds," said Bhullar, expressing satisfaction.

Shiv Kapur hit the headlines when he delivered a stunning hole-in-one on the par-three hole two, but he was well off the pace during the rest of his four-over tale and eventually stood at T-117.

"I have been playing on the Asian Tour for about 22 years, and this was my first ace. The hole-in-one put a smile on my face.

"It was a silver lining on what was an otherwise tough day," said Shiv.

Fellow Indians Shaurya Bhattacharya, Ajeetesh Sandhu and Rashid Khan were tied-29th with shows of one-under, while Karandeep Kochhar (T-54) and Jeev Milkha Singh (T-133) – who struggled to adapt to the energy-sapping conditions – had a disappointing day.

Even battle: Wu was quick off the blocks, but Ham matched him despite a bogey. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Top scores: 64: Ekpharit Wu (Tha) and Jeongwoo Ham (Kor); **66:** Charles Porter (USA), Aidric Chan (Phi) and Kieran Vincent (Zim); **67:** John Catlin (USA), Will Florimo (Aus), Kevin Yuan (Aus), Gaganjeet Bhullar (Ind), Tomohiro Ishizaka (Jpn), Luis Masaveu (Esp) and Ryosuke Kinoshita (Jpn).

(The writer is in Singapore at the invitation of The International Series).

Fortuitous: Jeev attributed his 2008 Singapore Open success to a timely intervention and 'god's work.' FILE PHOTO

How a Thai referee's intervention helped Jeev clinch the 2008 Singapore crown

S. Shrivathsan
SINGAPORE

Jeev Milkha Singh had a hard time in the first round of the Singapore Open on Thursday.

But moments after he was done for the day, the elder statesman of Indian golf left his struggles behind; in fact, during an interaction with the media, the 54-year-old was in the mood to take a trip down memory lane and reminisce his 2008 triumph here.

Jeev revealed how the intervention of a Thai referee, who had watched the action unfold from miles away, and 'god's work' played a part in the Indian going all the way.

Amazing story

"The story is amazing; I would have been disqualified in the first round. I was on my fourth hole (13th on the course).

"I put my ball down and the ball moved. The rule is that if the ball moves, you cannot pick it up. But I did not realise it and put the ball back [in the original position]. I kept playing and got to the seventh hole, which was my 16th," Jeev began.

"Rain then intervened, so we had to come back the next morning to play. We were on live television, and the highlights were being shown (but the officials on ground did not penalise him). The Thai referee, whose name I do not recollect, called up the tournament director and said: 'Ask Jeev not to sign the card because he has a one-stroke penalty'. If I had done so, I would have been disqualified," the veteran continued.

"As I was about to sign my card, the tournament director informed me that I was penalised. I finished par 72 and I signed for a score of 73. I went on to win the tournament. Can you imagine it? The golfing gods and that referee helped me," said Jeev, who had overcome the challenge of big names to take home the crown.

Prachi. ISSF

Prachi wins 3P rifle gold in Jr. World Cup

Press Trust of India
CAIRO

Prachi Gaikwad struck gold in the women's 50m rifle 3-positions, while Naraen Pranav chipped in with a bronze in men's 10m air rifle at the ISSF Junior World Cup (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun) in Cairo on Thursday.

The results: Women's 50m 3P: 1. Prachi Gaikwad 354.6, 2. Darya Chuprys (AIN) 354.4, 3. Elena Kretinina (AIN) (343.3. **Men's 10m air rifle:** 1. Javohir Sokhibov (Uzb) 251.2, 2. Achilleas Sophocleous (Cyp) 250.2, 3. Naraen Pranav 229.5.

Vlasic endorses IOC's gene screening regulation for women's events

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

The International Olympic Committee's new policy, which mandates that eligibility for any female category is limited to biological females, has sparked debate.

Eligibility for the female category for all disciplines of an IOC event, including the Olympic Games, will be determined by SRY gene screening.

Two-time high jump World championship gold medallist Blanka Vlasic sees the logic behind protecting women's sport. "In sport, there should be strict policies. Things should be clear. Everybody competing should compete under the same standards, and have the same conditions. Women's sport should be protected in that way," Blanka said here on Thursday.

Clear view: Vlasic feels that everybody should compete under the same standards and conditions. K. MURALI KUMAR

A highly decorated athlete, Blanka is in the city as the international event ambassador of the TCS World 10K Bengaluru 2026.

Apart from the world championships, the Croatian has two World indoor championship golds, three World athletics final titles and two Olympic medals (2008 Beijing silver and 2016 Rio bronze) to her name.

Her personal best of 2.08m, set at the 2009 Zagreb Grand Prix, is third best in women's high jump history. The 42-year-old takes pride in having a clean record, free of doping stain. "I'm proud to have been part of the generation that jumped really, really high, and under the motto – 'We jump clean'," Blanka, who towers over the room at 6'4", said.

To take unethical shortcuts to attain a one-off success never appealed to Blanka.

"If you achieve success with shortcuts, then your success will probably be just one spark. But in sports, do you remember someone who won just one time? Or do you remember a champion who was present for 10 years, with his or her ups and downs? I was consistent for so many years in a highly competitive sport – that was the goal," she said.

"In track and field, it is very important to maintain your level for a long period of time. That is what is valued. Even if you are not Olympic gold medallist or world champion, if you are consistently in the top 10 in the world for more than 10 years, you could say that you had a great career," Blanka said.

WFI brings in four foreign coaches

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) and the Sports Authority of India (SAI) have finalised four coaches, including high performance director Ian Butler from the USA, to train the country's elite wrestlers in the run-up to this year's Asian Games and 2028 Olympics.

The other three coaches are Shako Bentinidis, Gogi Koguashvili and Kosei Akaishi. They are expected to sign their contracts next week.

Butler will coordinate between the Indian and foreign coaches, monitor training plans and athletes' progress, ensure good communication across camps and ensure accountability for better performance.

LA28: cricket stadium construction begins

Sports Bureau

A ground-breaking ceremony was held on the Fairplex Grounds at Pomona, about 50km from Los Angeles, California, for the construction of a cricket stadium marking the game's return to the Olympics in LA28 after 128 years. The venue, known as the Knight Riders Cricket Ground, is set to host seven matches of the 2026 Major League Cricket season from July 1-5.

City edges ahead of Arsenal, Burnley relegated; Barca wins

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
BURNLEY

Manchester City edged ahead of Arsenal at the top of the Premier League as a 1-0 victory condemned Burnley to relegation on Wednesday. City goes ahead of the Gunners only on goals scored, with five games left.

Barcelona moved a step closer to winning La Liga with a tight 1-0 victory over Celta Vigo on Wednesday.

Cool finish: Haaland chips the ball over Burnley's Dubravka for City's winner. REUTERS

The results: Premier League: Bournemouth 2 (Kroupi 60, Rayan 85) drew with Leeds 2 (Hill 68-og, Longstaff 90+7).
Burnley 0 lost to Manchester City 1 (Haaland 5).
LaLiga: Elche 3 (Affengruber 18, Silva 33-pen, 75) bt Atletico Madrid 2 (Gonzalez 10, 36).

Real Sociedad 0 lost to Getafe 1 (Gorrotxategi 29-og); Barcelona 1 (Yamal 40-pen) bt Celta Vigo 0.

Hernandez heads Blasters past Odisha

ISL

M.R. Praveen Chandran
KOCHI

A stoppage time header from substitute Matias Hernandez gave Kerala Blasters a 2-1 win over visiting Odisha FC in the ISL match at the Jawaharlal Nehru stadium here on Thursday.

Hernandez rose above the Odisha defenders to head in the winner from Ebindas' corner in the fourth minute of added time as Kerala Blasters recorded its third win of the season. Hernandez' goal ended a spirited challenge from Odisha.

Super sub: Hernandez, centre, rises above the Odisha defence to nod home Blasters' second. R.K. NITHIN

After a cagey start, Kerala Blasters went ahead in the 12th minute through its first positive move and a dash of luck. Kevin Yorke's shot from outside the box deflected off an Odisha defender and landed in front of an unmarked Victor Bertomeu. The Spanish striker did well to control the ball and boot it past goalkeeper Amrinder Singh.

Rahim Ali was central to Odisha's resurgence and the sustained pressure saw it draw level in the 27th minute when Hitesh Sharma put the former through on goal.

Blasters survived a nervy start in the second half during which Rahim tested Anwar Shaikh with a right footer.

When it appeared the match would peter out as a draw came the matchwinner from Hernandez.

The result: Kerala Blasters 2 (Victor Bertomeu 12, Matias Hernandez 90+4) bt Odisha FC 1 (Rahim Ali 27).